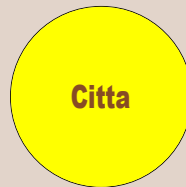


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# **A Book of Correlations between the Four Satipatthanas and Traditional Buddhist teachings**

**Mahabodhi**



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# **Book of Correlations**

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## About the Author

Mahabodhi was born Glenn Burton, in Hull, England in 1954. He studied physics at Manchester University but while there he became interested in politics, the arts and eastern spiritual traditions. His curiosity about how the different facets of human experience fit together continues to this day. He was interested in buddhism at that time but that interest only became concrete when he came upon the West London Buddhist Centre Notting Hill in 1988. He has been practicing meditation and buddhism within the context of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO) ever since, being ordained into the Western Buddhist Order in 1997 and being given the name Mahabodhi, meaning 'Great Enlightenment.' The aim of Mahayana buddhism being to make buddhism accessible to a wide audience, the name Mahabodhi reflects his populist focus, which has had him contributing to the field of ritual at the Manchester Buddhist Centre (MBC) and the Buddhafeld Festival, and the current project of clarifying and so making more accessible the theory and practice of mindfulness. He enjoys leading classes in buddhism and meditation at the MBC and is based in Manchester.



# Help in Reading the Document - Coding System

This book can be accessed in various ways. It is possible to 'skim' the main pages and get a general flavour of the ideas. You can then select topics you are interested in and go more deeply into them via the pages of text.

You may also wish to select particular approaches or type of content. You may be interested, for instance, more in poetic descriptions than technical content. In that case choose the pages with the poetic coding.

The other codes refer to pages which require buddhist experience or knowledge of buddhist terms, those that contain reflections or meditation practices, and pages of reference material. For instance, included in the pages of reference material is the complete text of the Satipatthana Sutta which you may or may not be interested in reading.

The codes are meant as a general guide.

## Difficulty Level


Easy 

Moderate 


Advanced 


## Content / Approach


General 

Poetic description 


Buddhist - oriented 

Psychology - oriented 

Philosophy - oriented 

Technical 

Reference material 

Meditation practice 

## Preface

This book has been a slow 'alchemical' meditation since its original inception in 2003. I have taken the topic of mindfulness and mulled it over and its features have mysteriously if slowly become clearer. My main impetus has been to try to improve on what I have seen as less than convincing arguments on aspects of mindfulness in buddhist commentaries including the commentaries on the centrally important Satipatthana Sutta.

But over time I realised I was creating something new. What is new about the book is that it brings together buddhist method: the path of mindfulness expressed as the teaching of the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipatthanas*), with buddhist doctrine: the doctrine of Conditioned Coproduction (*pratīcasamutpāda*.) I am not aware of a buddhist commentator having explicitly done this with the buddhist teachings on mindfulness. In hindsight though it seems rather obvious that ones understanding of the path of practice should be informed by the insight achieved by that practice, in this case 'conditionality.' The conceptual understanding, of the relationships between the four *satipatthanas*, is expressed in a model I have called the *Satipatthana model*.

# introduction

## What this book is about

This book is about clarifying the topic of mindfulness, both for buddhist practitioners and for those who are adopting a secular approach. It is based on an exploration of the central buddhist text on mindfulness, the *Satipatthana Sutta*. In that text the Buddha explores the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipatthanas*. ) These are what, in the practice of mindfulness, the practitioner systematically brings their attention to. They consist of body, feelings, mental and emotional states, and objects present in the mind. By following the Buddha's instructions in the *Satipatthana Sutta* it is claimed that the individual can transcend the problems of life and gain enlightenment, *Nirvana*. Even if we are not seeking such a lofty goal, I will demonstrate that attention to the four foundations will bring lesser but still worthwhile benefits. In fact I am proposing that all human life can be encapsulated within the four foundations, and they can be used to explain how that life succeeds or falters across a range of disciplines.

## Why Mindfulness?

Buddhism has it that the people frame experience and their responses to it largely unconsciously. They grasp at ideology, sensation, as if to a raft. These may meet their needs to a degree, give them some sort of fulfilment, but even in successful of creations, there is often something missing, a piece to the puzzle. This is how philosophies, religions, aesthetic movements, have been created. The answer to the missing piece is often to seek out further sensations, different ideologies, other ways of being. What buddhism does is bring mindfulness to this process. Through it, we ask questions like: 'What is going on in my experience?' 'What is my purpose at the moment?' 'Where is it leading me?' 'How inclusive is my perspective?' We try to bring awareness to all of these things, and in doing so we make all of them more conscious. And in that consciousness we somehow bring our life more under control: more consciously choice-ful.

## Which Mindfulness?

There have been, with the advent of secular approaches to mindfulness, various attempts to define it which differ. At the same time there have been pleas to leave its definition vague. I think it is desirable, it being defined differently in different contexts, to follow Confucius's 'rectification of names': to not just talk about mindfulness *per se* as we move between different contexts but as we use the term specify which context we are thinking of it in: 'Mindfulness as defined in Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction', 'Mindfulness as defined in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy' 'Mindfulness as defined in the context of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.' This reflects the fact that the understanding of any concept is context-dependent. It is informed by the perspective that prevails in that context.

In the context of 'evidence-based psychology' the understanding given to mindfulness is from a scientific perspective. That demands a specific definition of mindfulness to serve as a hypothesis that can be tested, and practically mindfulness will tend to be seen as a technique. On the other hand, in MBSR, Jon Kabat-Zinn prefers to keep its definition vague and this better suits the idea of mindfulness as a practice. It allows a person to find out what mindfulness is by practicing it. It allows them to 'not know' in advance and therefore find out in experience. In each context the way mindfulness is envisioned and manifests will be different. This is true in terms of type, e.g mindfulness seen as a technique or as a practice, but it is also true in terms of scope: 'Mindfulness as defined in the context of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness' has a greater scope than 'Mindfulness as defined in Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction.' It is aimed beyond stress reduction, at the perfection of the human state.

**Satipatthana  
Sutta  
translation**

# Translation of Satipatthana Sutta

*This is an attempt at translating the Satipatthana Sutta, but with a difference. Because the original text is quite condensed and in places not completely clear as a practice, I have experimented with inserting additional material taken from elsewhere in the Pali Canon or from my experience of practice. I hope this helps the dharma be revealed. There is a precedent. Sangharakshita did something similar in creating his 'Levels of Awareness.' An example of something 'missing' in the Sutta that I have included is mental feeling which in the Sutta of the Dart is the second dart and in the Questions of King Milinda is what the arahant doesn't experience. My insertions, that are not a direct translation, are underlined.*

## commentary:

- 1 By practicing the four foundations of mindfulness they cease to be reliant on the world 'suing them' but instead, as this is a meditation practice, they 'suit themselves to the world.'
- 2 What is 'body'? The commentaries indicate that 'body' is 'affected by the weather' and so on. In other words it is experiential. But the text also talks about 'contemplating body internally and externally'. So I don't think 'body' just means 'the physical body'. It is obvious we also need to take the physical environment into account. We do this when we choose a place to meditate, but also when we take care how we look after our body as we go about in the world. It is fair to assume then that 'body' includes our physical body but also our tactile environment.
- 3 And applying everything else they know about meditation posture as well.
- 4 If body exists in the present moment there needs to be a way to help access it. When you 'know that you know' the detail of the breath you at least know your attention is in the present moment, and that is necessary before you can experience the body there.
- 5 They establish samattha. I am assuming that 'calming' includes generating vitality along with relaxation in the context of postural integrity.
- 6 Although in the Sutta the analogy is used between the skilled turner of a lathe knowing which 'turn' he is making and the practitioner knowing what the length of their breath is, each is also making something. The practitioner is 'making' a calm body that is a vehicle for *samattha* in the mind.
- 7 This is the 'internal, external, internal and external' part of the satipatthana refrain - see footnote 2. The original text has 'the practitioner contemplates the body internally, externally and both internally and externally.' I propose there needs to be a solid reason why this phrase is repeated as part of a 'summing up' in each section. With each foundation there are necessary distinctions to be made and these I think can satisfactorily account for the section that includes 'internal and 'external'. For instance to work on calming ones body it is

## The Satipatthana Sutta

The Buddha at one time was staying in the region of the Kurus at a market town named Kammasadhamma. While there he gave the following discourse to his followers:

'There is a comprehensive and complete path that leads directly to the realisation of Nirvana. It is called the four foundations of mindfulness. By following it humankind is led to a state of purification where there is no more sorrow, distress, pain or sadness.'

'On this path a practitioner applies mindfulness with passion and precision to four things. With mindfulness they passionately and correctly contemplate body, feelings, emotional and mental states, and objects present in the mind. In this way they leave behind their neurotic infatuations with the world <sup>1</sup>.'

## Mindfulness of Body <sup>2</sup>

### Breathing

'In order to mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate body, they set up mindfulness before them, of their body and physical environment. They select a suitable place within that environment for meditation, in a forest or at the root of a tree, an empty place, and there they set up their meditation posture, sitting cross-legged and holding the body erect <sup>3</sup>.'

'With mindfulness of body and environment established, they choose to place their attention on the detail of their breathing, on whether they are breathing in or out.

They mindfully, passionately and correctly observe when they are breathing in, and likewise when they are breathing out.'

'The direction of their breath being established, they choose to place their attention on the greater detail of the length of each breath.'

'They mindfully, passionately and correctly observe when they are breathing a long breath, and likewise when they are breathing a short breath.'

'The length of their breath being established, they access their bodily experience in the present moment, in the time-frame in which it exists, enveloping their whole body with mindfulness <sup>4</sup>.'

'Conscious of breathing in or breathing out, they are conscious of all of their body experience, and the state it is in, in the present moment.'

'The state of their body being established, they consciously act where necessary to change their bodily experience, and just as relaxation is like the unfurling of a fist, they apply the conditions that calm their bodily processes.'

'Conscious of breathing in or breathing out, they calm their bodily processes <sup>5</sup>. Like a skilled craftsman attending closely to detail, they know how to craft their body to be a vehicle supportive of mindfulness <sup>6</sup>.'

'They proceed, mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal <sup>7</sup> in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of the body, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of the body, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of the body <sup>8</sup>.



### commentary cont:

necessary to distinguish between the aspect of bodily experience that is one's body (which one has direct control over) and the aspect that is the external world (which one hasn't direct control over but has to work within). Similarly with feelings, one has influence over certain feelings (e.g. one has influence over how one thinks about life which influences one's mood). Those feelings need to be distinguished from other types of feeling over which one hasn't much direct influence (e.g. physical pain due to an injury). It makes sense to see the first type as 'feelings that are contemplated internally' and the second type as 'feelings that are contemplated externally.' Likewise with mental states it is necessary to know those mental states it is appropriate to take responsibility for (namely one's own, which should be seen as 'internal') and those it is not appropriate to take responsibility for (such as other people's, which should be seen as 'external'). In every satipatthana valuable information is gained by working mindfully at the boundary between these 'internal' and 'external' aspects (e.g. with mindfully changing any physical discomfort that you can change but also accepting what you cannot change.)

Such as interest, clarity, positivity and their opposites - the other satipatthanas.

The original text has: 'Or else, mindfulness that "there is body" is present in them just to the extent necessary for knowledge and awareness.' One applies mindfulness of body *just to the extent* necessary for knowledge and awareness. This implies it is possible to 'overdo' mindfulness of body. How does this fit in with Bhante's comment that with mindfulness (as the fifth spiritual faculty) there is 'no danger of getting caught up in an unbalanced enthusiasm for it' (Wisdom beyond Words p156.) I think mindfulness the spiritual faculty corresponds to 'knowledge and awareness', which we could call overall mindfulness as opposed to mindfulness of individual foundations such as body or feeling. These may be 'overdone' or neglected in relation to each other. As for instance when we are in a state of anxiety and are very aware of our feelings but find it hard to cope because we are not grounded in our body.

The practice of mindfulness of breathing while sitting in meditation posture is the least complex situation in which to generate mindfulness of body. It is therefore the best conditions in which to set about establishing it. From that basis we can then move on to more and more complex situations while trying to maintain mindfulness of body. I think the successive sections of the 'body' section of the Sutta: bodily position, full attention to the body, and so on, successively represent increasingly complex situations in which to maintain mindfulness of body. For instance with 'attention to bodily parts' it is likely that uncomfortable feelings such as revulsion may become involved and we will have to try to ground our awareness while these are going on. And in the final section, when we see or imagine a pile of dust where a person we have known has been, we are least likely to stay calm. These six sections of mindfulness of body I suggest represent the development and maintenance of samattha under increasing strong conditions for vipassana. They represent the systematic cultivation of *samattha*: to practice being calm under all circumstances, beginning with the simplest situation and extending to the most complex and challenging.

I have added this insert at the end of each of the 'body' sections even though it is not there in the text. It seems reasonable that if one concentrates on calming one's bodily processes while doing the mindfulness of breathing then one extends that into all 'bodily' activity. In any of the six sections it is possible to get distracted from bodily awareness into thoughts and feelings, possibly worry, but it is then always possible and indeed necessary to keep coming back to the body, physically let go and calm the body.

Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of the body with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness <sup>9</sup>. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

### Bodily Position <sup>10</sup>

'When the practitioner is not meditating on the breath but is moving about in the world, they maintain mindfulness of the body by attending to the detail of their bodily position as experienced in the present moment. When they are walking, they clearly know they are walking. When they are standing, they clearly know they are standing. When they are sitting, they clearly know they are sitting. When they are lying down, they clearly know they are lying down. Likewise they proceed in this way when in any bodily position. And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down <sup>11</sup>.'

'They proceed in this way, mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of the body, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of the body, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of the body. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of the body with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

### Full Attention to the Body

'In the same way, when they are engaged in a range of activities, they consciously and correctly discern what they are doing. Whether they are moving forward, moving backward, looking forward, looking backward, bending, stretching, carrying objects, eating, drinking, chewing, savouring, going to the toilet, walking, standing still, falling asleep, waking up, speaking or staying silent, they consciously and correctly discern what they are doing. And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down. '

'They proceed in this way, mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of the body, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of the body, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of the body. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of the body with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

### Attention to Bodily Parts

'In the same way, the practitioner reviews all the parts of their body from the crown of their head to the soles of their feet along with its manifold impurities. They mindfully observe "Here are head-hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bone, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, mesentery, bowels, stomach, excrement, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, tallow, saliva, snot, synovial fluid, urine" just as if they were a person with good eyesight looking into a bag full of various kinds of grains and correctly identifying "Here is hill-rice, paddy, green gram, kidney beans, sesame, husked rice" And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to the whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down. '

'They proceed in this way, mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under

their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of the body, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of the body, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of the body. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of the body with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

#### **Attention to Material Elements**

'In the same way, the practitioner reviews their body, however it may be disposed, in terms of the elemental qualities, earth, water, fire and air. As if they were a skilled butcher who had just slaughtered a cow and was sitting at a crossroads with the carcass divided into portions, the practitioner reviews their body in terms of the elements, earth, water, fire and air: "This body is composed of the earth element, the water element, the fire element and the air element." And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down.'

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of the body, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of the body, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of the body. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of the body with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

#### **Corpse Meditations**

'In the same way, the practitioner, if they were to see a human corpse thrown on the ground, left out in the open for a few days, which was bloated, discoloured and festering, looking at their own body they would correctly determine "My body will become like that. It is not exempt from that fate." And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down.'

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

'In the same way, the practitioner, if they were to see a human corpse thrown on the ground, left out in the open, which had been eaten by crows, hawks, vultures, or by dogs or jackals or various other creatures, looking at their own body they would correctly determine "My body will become like that. It is not exempt from that fate." And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down.'

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

'In the same way, the practitioner, if they were to see thrown on the ground, left out in the open, a skeleton connected by sinews with flesh and blood on it, or a fleshless skeleton still connected by sinews and smeared with blood, or a skeleton with no flesh or blood left on it, or a random collection of bones lying on the ground, a hand bone here, a spine there, looking at their own body they would correctly determine "My body will become like that. It is not exempt from that fate." And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down.'

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.'

'In the same way, the practitioner, if they were to see thrown on the ground, left out in the open, whitened human bones, looking like shells, year-old bones piled up, bones rotting away to powder, looking at their own body they would correctly determine "My body will become like that. It is not exempt from that fate." And as in sitting meditation they continue to bring mindfulness to their whole body in the present moment, and as relaxation can be seen as the simple unfurling of a fist, they look for and apply conditions in the present moment that calm the body down.'

### commentary cont:

- 12 A search of every aspect of 'feeling' mentioned in the Pali Canon brings two basic categories. Feeling has both a tone - pleasureable, painful or neutral, and it has a source. Hence 'pleasureable worldly feeling'. Its sources are body - bodily feeling (sensation) or *kayika vedana* ; heart-mind (*citta* ), in a skilful state - spiritual feeling or *niramisa vedana* , or in an unskilful state - worldly feeling or *samisa vedana* ; and objects present in the mind (*dhammas* ) - mental feeling (mood) or *cetasika vedana* .
- 13 worldly feeling
- 14 spiritual feeling
- 15 Whether one has control over a feeling or not depends on its source. If one potentially has control over the source one potentially has control over the feeling. Because one has potential control over ones state of mind one can potentially choose whether one ends up cultivating worldly feeling or spiritual feeling, and because one has potential control over the objects present in ones mind, one has influence over ones mood. These types of feeling we should consider to be in the category 'internal'. But we cannot at will change our bodily experience, so sensation we should consider to be in the category 'external'.
- 16 Such as groundedness, clarity, positivity and their opposites - the other satipatthanas.
- 17 Again, we need not get too obsessed with awareness of feeling at the expense of overall awareness of other things. But instead to develop awareness of them in the context of awareness of bodily experience, emotional and mental responses and a perspective that includes views. If we were to associate the spiritual faculty *viriya* with mindfulness of feeling and the spiritual faculty *samadhi* with mindfulness of body, which I think we can, overall mindfulness would balance these out.
- 18 The area of 'Mind Creative, Mind Reactive.' *Citta* is Mind as in *Heart and Mind*, hence 'emotional and mental states.' Going on the list of states mentioned in the Sutta, *citta* obviously covers emotion (hatred), consciousness (shrunk), awareness (distracted), and insight (enlightened). I think the list can in theory be extended to cover every possible mental or emotional state (think in terms of the 51 mental events). It certainly must include metta, compassion and so on. Emotional states differ from feelings in being *responses* rather than fruits (*vipaka* ) of one or another niyama. Within the 'dimension' of emotion for instance, faced with the pain of seeing someone we think of as our enemy (and therefore experiencing painful worldly feeling) we have the choice between a reactive emotional response such as hatred or a creative emotional response such as *metta*. Or, taking up the 'dimension' of conscious awareness, when faced with painful sensation, we can either react - by shrinking from it or distracting ourselves - or we have the choice to creatively open up to it - to towards it with awareness and acceptance.
- 19 A boundary concerning emotional and mental states it is obvious we need to be aware of is which of them are our responsibility, which we should see as 'internal', and which are not our responsibility, which we should see as 'external'. With a keen sense of proper ownership and responsibility we can move more easily through the world of mental states.
- 20 Such as groundedness, clarity, interest and their opposites - the other satipatthanas.
- 21 An example of our not weighing things correctly is when, perhaps out of a rather forced idealism (as with the story of Sona and the strings of the lute), we are keen to better our mental states, and rather than taking them into account we over-ride our body and feelings. This is not mindfulness.

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body. They are mindful of that body which is internal in the sense of being under their control, and of that body which is external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can navigate a calm body through the world. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of the body, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of the body, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of the body. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of the body with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they proceed mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating body.'

### Mindfulness of Feeling

'And how does a practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate feelings? They are aware, whenever they experience any kind of feeling, what kind of feeling it is <sup>12</sup>. They know when they are experiencing a pleasant feeling that it is a pleasant feeling. They know when they are experiencing a painful feeling that it is a painful feeling. They know when they are experiencing a neutral feeling that it is a neutral feeling. They also know apart from its tone, what the source of the feeling is. They know when a feeling is sensation arising in the body. They know when a feeling is a mood growing out of the way they are thinking about life: from objects present in their mind. They know when a feeling is conditioned by a state of mind that is oriented towards infatuation with the world <sup>13</sup>, and they know when a feeling is conditioned by a state of mind that is oriented other than towards infatuation with the world <sup>14</sup>.'

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating feelings. They are mindful of feelings that are internal <sup>15</sup> in the sense of potentially being under their control, and of feelings that are external in the sense of not being under their control, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can intelligently navigate the world of feeling. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of feeling, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of feeling, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of feeling<sup>16</sup>. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of feelings with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness<sup>17</sup>. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they proceed mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating feelings.'

### Mindfulness of Emotional and Mental States <sup>18</sup>.

'And how does a practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate emotional and mental states? They are aware, whatever emotional or mental state they are in, that they are in that state. They know when they are motivated by craving, hatred or delusion and when these are absent. They know whether their awareness is shrunk or whether it is wandering in distraction. They know when their mind is full of good qualities, such as loving kindness, compassion, or equanimity and when those qualities are less developed. They know when their emotional and mental qualities cannot be bettered, and they know when they can. They know when their mind is in a state of concentration and when it is not concentrated, and they know when their mind is enlightened, and when it is yet to attain enlightenment.'

'They proceed in this way mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating emotional and mental states. They are mindful of those emotional and mental states that are internal <sup>19</sup> in the sense of effectively being under their control, and of those emotional and mental states that are external in the sense of not being under their control, such as the mental states of other people, and they correctly contemplate the relationship between the two through the knowledge of which they can intelligently navigate the world of emotional and mental states. They proceed, correctly determining the factors that support mindfulness of emotional and mental states, and correctly determining the factors that work against mindfulness of emotional and mental states, and the combined effect of every factor on mindfulness of emotional and mental states <sup>20</sup>. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to mindfulness of emotional and mental states with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, so that it is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness <sup>21</sup>. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they

### commentary cont:

- 22 Humans have the capacity to make assessments about the world they live in. They notice their experience and give it names or represent it by images. They form concepts and have abstract ideas about their experience. These are mind-objects. Over time they learn to arrange all of these mind-objects into some sort of perspective that comes to be their belief system. In different belief systems different ideas or images are prominent. The ideas or images that dominate our minds really tell us what we believe in and dictate our behaviour, no matter what we might think we believe in! But we can influence what we believe in by dwelling on particular ideas or images, as we do say in sadhana, or by reflecting on the validity of our perspective, say through study or reflection. This is essentially what 'contemplating mind-objects in mind-objects' is about. We are looking to bring to consciousness the actual objects present in our minds, what effectively we are dwelling on, and then to site them in more true context by reflecting on our perspective. The five sections in this part of the Sutta are reflections that encourage us to reflect on different aspects of experience from a perspective in which the idea of conditionality is in the foreground, i.e. a dharmic perspective. We attempt to contextualise our experience within a dharmic perspective. 'Mind-objects' is a translation of 'dhammas' and so 'contemplating the dhammas in the dhammas' can be translated as 'seeing phenomena as they are represented in the mind from the perspective of buddhist truth.'
- 23 I am taking 'contemplates mind-objects internally, externally and both internally and externally' to mean a person owning and examining their views in the light of the dharma.
- 24 Such as groundedness, interest, positivity and their opposites - the other satipatthanas.
- 25 Like with the other satipatthanas it is possible to overdo attention to reflection and for that to get in the way of overall mindfulness, for instance having a clear dharmic perspective but not putting it into practice as one might.
- 26 The five sections (hindrances, skandhas, etc.) represent dharmic reflections on different aspects of experience. It is noticeable that both the 'body' and 'mind-objects' sections of the Sutta are long and have multiple parts whereas the 'feeling' and 'emotional and mental states' sections of the Sutta are short single sections. Perhaps there is a particular reason for this. If the text of the 'body' satipatthana illustrates how one should maintain samattha under increasingly strong levels of vipassana, the 'mind-objects' satipatthana might have a similar sequential process going on. Its' sequence might be that of cultivating and maintaining vipassana in more and more universal circumstances. Its' sequence begins by identifying unhelpful mental states - hindrances to meditation - and generating a dharmic perspective on them. That perspective then broadens out more and more with each section until the four noble truths involve insight into all of conditioned existence.

proceed mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplating emotional and mental states.'

### Mindfulness of Objects Present in the Mind <sup>22</sup>

'And how does a practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind?'

#### The Five Hindrances

'They mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the five hindrances to meditation.'

'When sensual desire is present in the mind they represent it by an appropriate mind-object, either by the name or concept "sensual desire" or by an image that represents for them sensual desire. They also represent their mind by an appropriate mind-object, either by the name or concept "my mind" or by an image. And in their minds they have a perspective where these two mind-objects are closely associated. In this way they correctly register that sensual desire is present in their mind. When sensual desire is not present in the mind they do not make this association.'

With regards to sensual desire, the practitioner brings forth a dharmic perspective on sensual desire. They see it as a hindrance to meditation. They clearly understand the conditions through which it comes about, they understand the conditions that support its removal, and they understand the conditions that prevent it re-arising in the future.'

'The practitioner proceeds in this way with each hindrance to meditation: with ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and anxiety, and doubt and indecision. They clearly know when they are present in the mind, know them *as hindrances to meditation*, and know the conditions for their eradication and future prevention.'

'In this way they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the five hindrances to meditation. They are mindful of the extent to which they have internalised <sup>23</sup> a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they are mindful of the extent to which they have not internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they contemplate how they can intelligently bring such a dharmic perspective more consciously into their lives. They correctly determine the factors that support a dharmic perspective with reference to the five hindrances to meditation, and correctly determine the factors that work against a dharmic perspective with reference to the five hindrances to meditation, and correctly determine the combined effect of all these factors on a dharmic perspective with reference to the five hindrances to meditation <sup>24</sup>. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to a dharmic perspective with reference to the five hindrances to meditation with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, in a way that is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness <sup>25</sup>. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the five hindrances to meditation.'

#### The Five Skandhas <sup>26</sup>

'The practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplates objects present in the mind in terms of the five skandhas.'

'When experiencing 'form', they correctly represent it by an appropriate mind-object, either the name or concept, "form" or by an image that represents 'form'. With regards to 'form', they construct a dharmic perspective around it by clearly understanding the conditions through which 'form' comes about, and clearly understanding the conditions whereby it ceases. The practitioner proceeds in the same way with each of the skandhas: 'feelings', 'perceptions', 'volitions' and 'consciousness.'

'In this way they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the five skandhas. They are mindful of the extent to which they have internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they are mindful of the extent to which they have not internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living in terms of those mind-objects, and they contemplate how they can intelligently bring such a dharmic perspective more consciously into their lives. They

correctly determine the factors that support a dharmic perspective on the five skandhas, and correctly determine the factors that work against a dharmic perspective on the five skandhas, and correctly determine the combined effect of all these factors on a dharmic perspective on the five skandhas. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to a dharmic perspective with reference to the five skandhas with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, in a way that is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the five skandhas.'

#### **The Six Internal and External Sense Bases**

'The practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplates objects present in the mind in terms of the six internal and external sense bases.'

'When experiencing the sense base 'eye', they correctly represent it by an appropriate mind-object, either by the name or concept 'eye' or by an image that represents for them 'eye'. When experiencing those sense objects that are 'visual forms', they correctly represent them by the appropriate mind-objects, either by names or concepts that correctly represent those "visual forms" or by images that correctly represent them. When experiencing those fetters that arise in dependence on the sense base 'eye' and on the sense objects that are 'visual forms', they correctly represent those fetters by appropriate mind-objects, either by names or concepts that correctly represent those "fetters" or by images that correctly represent them. With regards to these fetters, they construct a dharmic perspective around them by understanding the conditions through which they come about, understanding the conditions that support their removal, and the conditions that prevent them re-arising in the future.'

'The practitioner proceeds in the same way with the fetters that arise in dependence on the sense base 'ear' and on auditory sense objects, on the sense base 'nose' and on olfactory sense objects, on the sense base 'tongue' and on gustatory sense objects, on the sense base 'body' and on tactile sense objects, and on the sense base 'mind' and on mental objects.'

'In this way they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the six internal and external sense bases. They are mindful of the extent to which they have internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects. and they are mindful of the extent to which they have not internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they contemplate how they can intelligently bring such a dharmic perspective more consciously into their lives. They correctly determine the factors that support a dharmic perspective on the six internal and external sense bases, and correctly determine the factors that work against a dharmic perspective on the six internal and external sense bases, and correctly determine the combined effect of all these factors on a dharmic perspective on the six internal and external sense bases. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to a dharmic perspective with reference to the six internal and external sense bases with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, in a way that is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the six internal and external sense bases.'

#### **The Seven Factors of Enlightenment**

'The practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplates objects present in the mind in terms of the seven factors of enlightenment.'

'When enlightenment factor of mindfulness is present in the mind they represent it by an appropriate mind-object, either by the name or concept "mindfulness" or by an image that represents for them mindfulness. They represent their mind by by an appropriate mind-object, either by the name or concept "my mind" or by an image that represents their mind. In their mind these two mind-objects are closely associated, therefore they correctly know that mindfulness is present in them. When mindfulness is not present in the mind they correctly do not associate the mind-object 'mindfulness' with the mind-object 'my mind', therefore they correctly know that mindfulness is not present in them. With regards to mindfulness, they construct a dharmic perspective around it by clearly seeing it as an enlightenment factor, by clearly understanding the conditions by which it comes about, and by clearly understanding the conditions by which it is completely developed.'

'The practitioner proceeds in the same way with the enlightenment factors 'investigation of mental states', 'energy in pursuit of the good', 'rapture', 'tranquility', 'concentration' and 'equanimity.'

'In this way they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the seven factors of enlightenment. They are mindful of the extent to which they have internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects. and they are mindful of the extent to which they have not internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they contemplate how they can intelligently bring such a dharmic perspective more consciously into their lives. They correctly determine the factors that support a dharmic perspective on the seven factors of enlightenment, and correctly determine the factors that work against a dharmic perspective on the seven factors of enlightenment, and correctly determine the combined effect of all these factors on a dharmic perspective on the seven factors of enlightenment. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to a dharmic perspective with reference to the seven factors of enlightenment with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, in a way that is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the seven factors of enlightenment.'

**commentary cont:**

- 27 An incorrect perspective on suffering - the hedonist's version - might be something like 'Life is not necessarily suffering', 'A lack of certain things or experiences is the origin of suffering', 'I really will be happy when I have got those things and experiences', 'There is a way leading to that - spending my time and energy pursuing them'
- 28 The Buddha is possibly referring to people with different capabilities.

**The Four Noble Truths**

'The practitioner mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplates objects present in the mind in terms of the four noble truths.'

'They cultivate a correct perspective among the objects present in their mind concerning the four noble truths, namely "This is suffering", "This is the origin of suffering", "This is the cessation of suffering", "This is the way of practice leading to the cessation of suffering." 27'

'In this way they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the four noble truths. They are mindful of the extent to which they have internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they are mindful of the extent to which they have not internalised a dharmic perspective they are consciously living, in terms of those mind-objects, and they contemplate how they can intelligently bring such a dharmic perspective more consciously into their lives. They correctly determine the factors that support a dharmic perspective on the four noble truths, and correctly determine the factors that work against a dharmic perspective on the four noble truths, and correctly determine the combined effect of all these factors on a dharmic perspective on the four noble truths. Alternatively they proceed, weighing their attention to a dharmic perspective with reference to the four noble truths with their attention to mindfulness of other conditions, in a way that is supportive of overall knowledge and awareness. In this way the practitioner leaves behind their neurotic infatuations with the world. This is how they mindfully, passionately and correctly contemplate objects present in the mind in terms of the four noble truths.'

'Whosoever practises these four foundations of mindfulness for a period of time up to seven years but in some cases 28 for as little as a week should expect the fruit of highest knowledge, nirvana in the here and now, or if there is some attachment remaining, the state of Non-returning. And because of this I was able to say: 'This is the comprehensive and complete path that leads directly to the realisation of Nirvana, called the four foundations of mindfulness. By following it humankind is led to a state of purification where there is no more sorrow, distress, pain or sadness'' '

And hearing this the Buddha's followers rejoiced in his words.

# commentary

## Commentary on the Sutta

The Sutta sums up the path of mindfulness in the second paragraph: 'There is a comprehensive and complete path that leads directly to the realisation of Nirvana. It is called the four foundations of mindfulness. By following it humankind is led to a state of purification where there is no more sorrow, distress, pain or sadness'.....'On this path a practitioner applies mindfulness with passion and precision to four things. With mindfulness they passionately and correctly contemplate body, feelings, emotional and mental states, and objects present in the mind. In this way they leave behind their neurotic infatuations with the world.' It says the sufferings of life are overcome by paying attention in a particular way to body, feelings, emotional and mental states, and objects present in the mind - the four foundations of mindfulness. For each of those objects of attention that way involves four processes that I have translated as mindfulness; passion; precision or correctness; and contemplation. In the following pages I am going to look at each of these in turn to shed light on the processes involved in this path of mindfulness.

The original terms in Pali for the four foundations are: body, *kaya* ; feelings, *vedana* ; emotional and mental states, *citta* ; and objects present in the mind, *dhammas*. The terms for the processes applied to each of those are: mindfulness, *sati* ; passion, *atapi* ; precision or correctness, *sampajana* ; and contemplation, *anupassī* . *Sampajana* is alternatively translated as clear comprehension. As we shall see, *sampajana* involves an understanding of the role of conditionality or *pratīcassamutpada*, and in the following pages this will be considered as well.





# Contemplation

The key sentence in the *Satipatthana Sutta* is: 'the monk or practitioner, with mindfulness, passionately and correctly *contemplates* body: later feelings, emotional and mental states, and objects present in the mind. This is my translation of the Pali '*bhikkhu kaye kayanupassī viharatī atapi sampajano satima*.' This sentence describes *what the practitioner does* in relation to the four foundations of mindfulness. The verb in the sentence is *anupassī*, contemplates; *bhikkhu* means 'monk or practitioner', *viharatī*, lives, dwells or inhabits, *atapi*, 'with passion,' *sampajano*, 'with clear comprehension,' *satima*, 'with mindfulness,' and *kaye* means 'body.' Another translation might be: 'the practitioner lives contemplating the body in the body, with mindfulness, clear comprehension, and passion.' But what does it mean to 'contemplate the body'?

*Contemplation* has a variety of meanings depending on the context. It can mean among other things to think about an idea, to dwell on the person of God, or to consider the consequences of an action. But whatever the meaning, in each case the person contemplating does so in relation to an *a priori* belief system. Plato for instance thought that through contemplation, the soul might ascend to knowledge of the Form of the Good, but prior to that he believed in 'the Form of the Good.' For christians, who already believe in a God, contemplation is about letting an experience of God affect them. In the world of the pragmatist, contemplation might centre on a practical concern, like the consequences of a particular action such as missing the bus to work. Yet despite their differences, there is a commonality between these contemplations, to get to work on time, to 'know the Form of the Good', or to experience the Divine, are *what these particular individuals consider important*. Likewise, buddhists contemplate the four foundations of mindfulness because of an implicit belief that *they are what's important*.

## Contemplation in Different Traditions

Such differences are illustrated if we compare contemplation in Science and in Eastern Christianity. According to *Wikipedia*, *contemplation* comes from the latin *templum* (from Greek *temnein*: to cut or divide,) and means 'to separate something from its environment, and enclose it in a sector.' *Contemplation* is the Latin translation of Greek 'theory' (*theoria*) and in a religious sense is a kind of prayer or meditation. The *Wikipedia* article goes on:

In Eastern Christianity contemplation or *theoria* literally means to see God or have a Vision of God . As a technique, *theoria* is expressed by the ascetic tradition of Hesychasm. Hesychasm is continuous prayer that is to focus with absolute sincerity, and to repeat in prayer, as a means to focus on the Triune God. It is to reconcile the heart and the mind into one thing (see *nous*.) The process of changing through contemplation into 'our true nature as good and divine' is called *theosis*. One derives 'spiritual knowledge' from *theoria*. One cannot however derive *theoria* from 'spiritual knowledge.' This is to say once someone is in the presence of God they can begin to properly understand and there "contemplate" God. This form of contemplation is to have and pass through an actual experience rather than a scientific understanding of theory. Whereas in science one uses theory to understand the natural world and its operations, one does the reverse with God. In science contemplation means one derives an explanation and then tests the "theory." Within the realm of Eastern Christianity theory is faith and one at first cultivates the virtues as an expression of faith. Once the virtues are cultivated the highest virtue is humility. Through humility one becomes Holy. God is humility and one becomes like God. This is the contemplation (living) of God. The Holy Wisdom of God is not knowledge but humility.<sup>1</sup>

What a person contemplates is what they have 'divided off' and enclosed in a separate sector from everything else, and from which they expect to learn. It is the *ground upon which they have faith*, what they believe in *a priori*. In Eastern Christianity that is experiencing the presence of God. In Science it is the holding of a coherent theory.

<sup>1</sup> contemplation. (n.d.). *Wikipedia*. Retrieved October 22, 2009, from Wikipedia.org website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contemplation> )

## Contemplation and the Future

The origin of 'contemplation' according to the *Online Etymology Dictionary* is: "to mark out a space for observation" (as an augur does.) From *com-* intensive prefix + *templum* "area for the taking of auguries" (see temple).<sup>1</sup> A religious practice in ancient Rome was assessing the wisdom of a future action by looking for good omens (augurs) for instance in the patterns of bird flight, a similar practice to Greeks visiting the oracle.

Augury - prophetic divining of the future by observation of natural phenomena-particularly the behaviour of birds and animals and the examination of their entrails and other parts, but also by scrutiny of man-made objects and situations. The term derives from the official Roman augurs, whose constitutional function was not to foretell the future but to discover whether or not the gods approved of a proposed course of action, especially political or military. Two types of divinatory sign, or omen, were recognized: the most important was that deliberately watched for, such as lightning, thunder, flights or cries of birds, or the pecking behaviour of sacred chickens; of less moment was that which occurred casually, such as the unexpected appearance of animals sacred to the gods-the bear (Artemis), wolf (Apollo), eagle (Zeus), serpent (Asclepius), and owl (Minerva), for instance-or such other mundane signs as the accidental spilling of salt, sneezing, stumbling, or the creaking of furniture.<sup>2</sup>

The implication for contemplation being to 'mark out a space for observation' (of certain things - God in Christianity, theory in science, the four foundations of mindfulness in buddhism) has a certain bearing on one's welfare in the future -*augur* is possibly related to the Latin. *augos* "increase." Or one believes that to be the case - that is why one contemplates that object.

<sup>1</sup> contemplation. (n.d.). *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved October 22, 2009, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/contemplation> )

<sup>2</sup> augury. *Encyclopaedia Britannica 2004 Ultimate Reference Suite DVD*. Encyclopaedia Britannica.

## Contemplation and the Four Foundations

When we contemplate something we dwell on it, we come into relationship with it. We give our attention to it. In the Sutta 'the practitioner lives contemplating the body in the body.' If we consider the origin of 'contemplation' to be the Latin *contemplari*, 'to mark out carefully a temple or place for auguries,' an 'augur' is a good omen, an 'increase,' then by treating the body as a temple we somehow bring it to increase.

One understanding of 'contemplation' is thinking about or dwelling on a topic, but in 'contemplating with precision the body' the Buddha does not mean thinking about it. 'Contemplation' here has a much more meditative sense to it. A sense of bringing awareness to something, in terms of it being important itself. The icon present in a temple is considered holy and worthy of attention, and 'body' has this sense here. On the path of mindfulness we bring careful attention to body (and later feelings, etc) as being worthy of our attention, having the idea (or belief) that in doing so, a good outcome will come of it (it will augur well). A temple extends the principle that what we value we adorn and give (sacred) space to. With the four foundations we give space to body (feelings, etc.)

Also, we do that so with *precision*. We contemplate the body *in the body* - *kaye kayanupassī* (this phrase is alternately translated 'contemplate the body *in and of itself*,') contemplate feelings *in feelings* - *vedanasu vedananupassī*, and so on. We don't just have ideas in the mind about the body. That would be 'contemplate the body as an idea in the mind - *dhammesu kayanupassī*. We only live in the 'temple of ideas' when we are 'contemplating *dhammas in the dhammas*. When we are contemplating body we are in the 'temple of body,' when we are contemplating feelings we are in the 'temple of feelings,' and so on. The four foundations of mindfulness are best experienced within meditation where there is space to distinguish one domain or temple, such as the domain of 'feelings, from another, like 'body' or 'ideas.' In fact in the Sutta the practice begins sitting in a meditation posture. And coming back repeatedly to meditation is how it is best known.

# Contemplation in the Right Domain

**Fig.1 All the Possible Combinations of Domain and Object of Contemplation**

DOMAIN				
	Body	Feeling	Heart-Mind	Objects in the Mind
Body	<b>kaye kayanupassi</b> seeing body as body ✓	<b>kaye vedananupassi</b> seeing body as feeling ✗	<b>kaye cittanupassi</b> seeing body as mental state ✗	<b>kaye dhammanupassi</b> seeing body as mental object ✗
Feeling	<b>vedanasu kayanupassi</b> seeing feeling as body ✗	<b>vedanasu vedananupassi</b> seeing feeling as feeling ✓	<b>vedanasu cittanupassi</b> seeing feeling as mental state ✗	<b>vedanasu dhammanupassi</b> seeing feeling as mental object ✗
Heart-Mind	<b>citte kayanupassi</b> seeing mental state as body ✗	<b>citte vedananupassi</b> seeing mental state as feeling ✗	<b>citte cittanupassi</b> seeing mental state as mental state ✓	<b>citte dhammanupassi</b> seeing mental state as mental object ✗
Objects in the Mind	<b>dhammesu kayanupassi</b> seeing mental object as body ✗	<b>dhammesu vedananupassi</b> seeing mental object as feeling ✗	<b>dhammesu cittanupassi</b> seeing mental object as mental state ✗	<b>dhammesu dhammanupassi</b> seeing mental object as mental object ✓
OBJECT	✗	✗	✗	✓

It is important to be 'in the right place' when we contemplate. It is no use seeing everything in terms of ideas or imagination for instance. *Anupassi* can be broken down into *passi* to see and *anu-* which means something like 'along with / in accordance with.' *Dhammanupassi* then is to 'see along with / in accordance with ideas and images (mental objects)'. If we see ideas and images in accordance with ideas and images then that is fine. We are contemplating or thinking about ideas and we know we are doing that. But if we are mistaking ideas about the body for the body itself, then we will be seeing our experience in the abstract and are in the wrong domain to treat it with any gravity. But if we are sitting in meditation experiencing our body fully as a body then we are much more likely to take it seriously and act if necessary to alleviate tension in it. What is implied by the four foundations of mindfulness is we have to appropriately inhabit each domain in turn, and not be confined to one or another.



# Mindfulness

In the *Sutta* 'the monk or practitioner, *with mindfulness*, passionately and correctly contemplates body. Mindfulness, *sati* is often talked about as awareness or recollection, as opposed to distraction. It is particularly mentioned in terms of mindfulness of the present moment.

In fact mindfulness is a number of things. It is

- 1) a state of mind. Mindfulness is a configuration of *citta* - the 'heart-mind.' When we are being mindful we 'hold' the object of mindfulness in consciousness. The 'heart-mind' expands to embrace that object.
- 2) recollection. When the 'heart-mind' embraces an object of memory, that is recollection. Recollection is particularly important when the memory contain valuable insights that are helpful to remember, such as when we remember to practice meditation when that has been helpful, or we remember the Buddha's teachings.
- 3) a sense of continuity of purpose. Once we have a sense of purpose, concerted recollection of it helps give that purpose a sense of continuity. It gives us a thread through our life that Sangharakshita links with a sense of what he calls 'true individuality.'
- 4) an exploration of the actual in our lives: what we are actually experiencing in the present moment.



## Mindfulness as Perfect Mindfulness

Mindfulness, as *Perfect Mindfulness (samma sati)*, is one of the eight limbs in the Noble Eightfold Path and one of five 'spiritual faculties' (*panca-indriya*), the others being faith (*saddha*), wisdom (*panna*), energy in pursuit of the good (*viriya*) and concentration (*samadhi*). If these five faculties are completely developed, *buddhahood* is attained (Sn V 48 2.2).

We can see mindfulness as existing on two levels: at the level of the spiritual faculty and at the level of ordinary activity of the mind. At the level of ordinary activity of the mind mindfulness is applied within one faculty and through it that faculty is developed. But at the level of the spiritual faculty mindfulness operates as a balancing factor. Through recollecting that each faculty needs to be developed *in concert with the others*, the practitioner achieves *indriya-samatta*, the equalization of the faculties.<sup>1</sup> This equalization is explored in Sangharakshita's lecture *The Pattern of Buddhist Life and Work*.<sup>2</sup>

The five spiritual faculties are completely developed in the enlightened person. But short of enlightenment they are less developed and it is here that the buddhist scriptures say that problems can arise in dealing with the faculties. The most attained practitioners (called stream entrants) understands some of these problems. They understand 'as they really are the gratification, the danger and the escape in the case of these five faculties'<sup>3</sup> As such they are called 'ascetics among ascetics,' which we could translate as 'practitioners among practitioners.'

The ordinary practitioner of mindfulness might focus their mindfulness on one particular faculty. They might for instance through practicing awareness of the breath in the present moment, develop concentration (*samadhi*). This is mindfulness at the ordinary level of mind and practice of it makes them a practitioner. But the 'practitioners among practitioners' see danger in this. They see that awareness on its own is no guarantee of success. With it one may get so far (*gratification*) but then one may lose the bigger picture (it *escapes* or one *escapes it*.) So mindfulness itself may become unbalanced unless one is also applying it at the level of equalization of the faculties. There will be some danger if one does not perfect ones mindfulness at this level.

<sup>1</sup> Sangharakshita, B. (1980) *A Survey of Buddhism*. London: Windhorse p284

<sup>2</sup> Sangharakshita, B. (1998) *What is the Dharma?: the essential teachings of the Buddha* Birmingham: Windhorse

<sup>3</sup> Bodhi, B. (2000) *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*. Boston: Wisdom p1668 2(2)

# Mindfulness and the Spiritual Faculties

What are the Five Spiritual Faculties? According to the scriptures <sup>1</sup> the faculty of Faith is to be seen in the four factors of stream entry: confidence in the Buddha as being enlightened, the Dharma his teachings, and the Sangha, the community of buddhists as well as possession of 'virtues dear to the noble ones - unbroken, unblemished, freeing, praised by the wise, ungrasped, leading to concentration.' The faculty of Energy in pursuit of the Good is seen in the practice of the four 'right efforts,' in being strong, firm in exertion and not shirking in the cultivation of wholesome mental states. The faculty of Mindfulness is where the noble disciple 'is mindful, possessing supreme mindfulness and discretion, one who remembers and recollects what was done and said long ago. The faculty of Mindfulness is seen in the 'four establishments of mindfulness (*satipatthanas*).' The faculty of Concentration is where the noble disciple intent on enlightenment, gains concentration and one-pointedness of mind and it is seen in the four jhanas. And the faculty of Wisdom is where the noble disciple is wise, possessing wisdom directed at the arising and passing away of conditions, and which leads to the complete destruction of suffering. It is seen in the Four Noble Truths.

The faculty of Mindfulness is seen in the 'four establishments of mindfulness.' These are body, feeling, heart-mind and mental objects. These are what the practitioner brings their attention to in the Satipatthana Sutta. But the faculty of Mindfulness also oversees or balances the other four spiritual faculties. So perhaps these spiritual faculties are reasonably correlated with the four satipatthanas (Fig.1). Let's suppose they are and let's see where that leads later.

**Fig. 1 Correlation with the Foundations of Mindfulness**

Spiritual Faculty	Foundation of Mindfulness
Concentration	Body
Energy in Pursuit of the Good	Feeling
Confidence / Trust	Heart / Mind
Wisdom	Mental Objects

<sup>1</sup> Bodhi, B. (2000) *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*. Boston: Wisdom p1670 8(8) & 9(9).

## Mindfulness as opposed to Obsession

General



Awareness itself needs oversight. If we are aware of one aspect of our experience it can be at the expense of other aspects. This is what happens when we are obsessed. The word *obsession* comes from a root meaning 'to besiege,' and when a town is besieged the inhabitants starve. When we are obsessed with one thing it is as if other parts of us, that also have needs, become starved (of attention). That obsession may be with an idea: of making progress for instance, or with an experience: of sensory gratification. In either case attention is not brought to what is beyond the object of our obsession. Mindfulness, in its role as an overarching spiritual faculty, counteracts this narrowing into obsession.

## The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

A *satipatthana*, or foundation of mindfulness, is something we bring attention to. *Satipatthana* derives from *sati* which means awareness or mindfulness, and *upatthana*, 'to place near'. A *satipatthana* is *something we place awareness near*. More specifically, it is a foundation of mindfulness *at the times* our attention is close to it. At other times it is only that in potential. When my awareness is really close to my bodily experience, my body is a *satipatthana*. *Satipatthana* is sometimes translated 'frame of reference.' I am effectively seeing life from the frame of reference of my body. A *satipatthana* being a perspective *with reference to* a particular place. Remembering what I was saying about contemplation being a reflection connected with a sacred space or temple, that space being a place we consider important or holy. With the four foundations of mindfulness we try to bring attention evenly to four 'holy sites': body, feelings, the heart-mind including its emotional and mental states, and the objects that are present in the mind. And as with contemplation we consider each in terms of its future. What augurs well in terms of bodily experience? What augurs well in terms of our feelings? Our states of mind? And so on. In this way we keep coming back to (recollecting) the importance of these conditions for our life and the lives of those around us. And out of reflecting on these four aspects, which we could say really make up our whole experience, a sense of purpose emerges which is based on firm experience.



# The Four Satipatthanas

## The Satipatthanas

Pali is one of the ancient Indian languages of the Buddha's day that many buddhist scriptures were written down in. The four *satipatthanas* in Pali are *kaya* - body, *vedana* - feeling, *citta* - heart-mind, and *dhammas* - objects present in the mind (also known as 'mental objects' or 'mental concomitants'.)

### Kaya

*Kaya* is body or bodily experience. It isn't 'the body' as in as independently existing object in the universe. That, from a phenomenological point of view, is something posited that cannot be confirmed in experience. It is more the experience of 'body,' which as we saw in the translation could be 'internal', i.e. experience of our own physical body, or 'external,' i.e. experience of 'body' in the world beyond our physical body. Not just other peoples' bodies but physical objects in general that impact on our experience.

### Vedana

*Vedana* is feeling. It is common among buddhist scholars to limit *vedana* to 'sensation,' but it is more than this. 'Sensation' is *kayika vedana* - "bodily feeling." The *Niramisa Sutta* of the *Vedanasamyutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya* mentions three other kinds of *vedana*: 'worldly feeling:' *niramisa vedana*, 'spiritual feeling:' *samisa vedana*, and 'more spiritual than spiritual feeling:' *niramisa niramisatara vedana*. In the *Sutta* of the Dart, another kind of *vedana* mentioned is *cetasika vedana* or mental feeling. A distinction exists between 'sensation' and the other types of *vedana* because an individual has potential control over all sources of *vedana* except the source of 'sensation,' the body. This is may be why people erroneously equate *vedana* with 'sensation.'

For example, in the moment one doesn't have control over ones bodily experience. If that experience is painful, 'bodily feeling' - the first dart. One always then responds to that experience, in two ways. One has a 'karmic' response, and a 'dharmic' response. The 'karmic' response is an emotional or mental state that can be skilful or unskilful. If it is skilful it conditions 'spiritual feeling.' If it is unskilful it conditions 'worldly feeling.' If it is skilful and informed by insight it conditions 'more spiritual than spiritual feeling.' The 'dharmic' response concerns ones view about one experience. If that view is not Right View it conditions 'mental feeling,' and if that is painful that is the second dart. But a person with Right View doesn't experience 'mental feeling' because it only arises when there is a disparity between an experience of reality and ones view of how it should be. Therefore because of this fundamental difference between 'sensation' and other kinds of feeling, it is understandable if not accurate to call *vedana* 'sensation.'

### Citta

*Citta* is often translated as 'heart-mind.' It is something like the general 'shape' of our psyche, including how it moves in response to the stimulation of experience. And that includes emotion as well as thinking and such other 'shapes' to do with consciousness such as being aware, unaware, distracted, scattered, concentrated, and so on. We could say it is Mind, but Mind as in *Heart and Mind*, in that it is constituted by a range of 'emotional and mental states.' Of those mentioned in the *Sutta* are hatred (emotion), greed (emotion), a shrunken state (consciousness), a distracted state (consciousness). The list could be extended beyond those mentioned in the *Sutta* to cover every possible mental or emotional state (we could think in terms of the 51 mental events). It certainly would include *metta* (loving kindness), compassion and so on.

*Citta* covers the area of 'Mind Creative, Mind Reactive' <sup>1</sup> in that it involves either creative or reactive responses to experience. Emotional states then are *responses* to feeling. Feelings are fruits (*vipakas*) of actions. Emotions are actions (of the heart-mind.) Faced with the pain of seeing someone we think of as an enemy - and therefore experiencing painful worldly feeling - we have the choice between a reactive emotional response such as hatred or a creative emotional response such as friendliness: *metta*. Or, faced with a painful physical sensation, we can either react to it by (usually unconsciously) shrinking from it or distracting ourselves from it, or choosing to be more creative in opening up to it - moving towards it with awareness and acceptance.

## **Dhammas**

*Dhammas* are the 'objects present in the mind.' Humans have the capacity to make assessments about the world they live in. To notice their experience and give it a name or represent it by an image. Or form concepts and have abstract ideas about experience. These are 'mind-objects.' Over time these mind-objects become arranged into some sort of perspective that effectively is their belief system. In different belief systems different ideas and images are prominent. These ideas and images that dominate our minds tell us what we really believe in, no matter what we might think we believe in, and dictate our behaviour! But we can influence our beliefs by dwelling on particular ideas or images, as we do say in reflection or contemplation. We can reflect on the validity of our perspective. This is essentially what the phrase 'contemplating mind-objects in mind-objects' is all about; we are looking to bring into consciousness the actual objects present in our minds, and then to site them in a more truer context by reflecting on our perspective. The five sections in this part of the Sutta are reflections that encourage us to reflect on different aspects of experience from a perspective in which the idea of conditionality is in the foreground, i.e. a dharmic perspective. We attempt to contextualise our experience within a dharmic perspective: to own and examining their views in the light of the dharma.

<sup>1</sup> see Sangharakshita, B. (1975) Mind, reactive and creative. Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. Retrieved October 29, 2009, from Freebuddhistaudio.com website: <http://www.freebuddhistaudio.com/talks/details?num=31>)

# The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

<p><b>body satipatthana</b></p> <p><b>aware of present moment experience</b></p> <p>of phenomena as experienced of appearances of the world when seen objectively</p> <p><i>Pali: kaya Sanskrit: kaya</i></p>	<p><b>feeling satipatthana</b></p> <p><b>aware of feeling, as a product of ...</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) having a body and senses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- physical pleasure and pain <sup>1</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>2) the state of ones heart or mind <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in a skilful state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'spiritual' pleasure and pain <sup>2</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>b) in an unskilful state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'worldly' pleasure and pain <sup>3</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> <li>3) objects in the mind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pleasant or unpleasant mood <sup>4</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><i>Pali: vedana Sanskrit: vedana</i></p>
<p><b>heart-mind satipatthana</b></p> <p><b>aware of the state of ones heart and mind</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) psychic tone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- resilient, fragile, flexible, concentrated, scattered</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) emotional tone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- warm, confident, abundant, cold, doubtful, needy</li> </ul> </li> <li>3) consciousness or otherwise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mindful, moving towards experience or unmindful, avoiding experience</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><i>Pali: citta Sanskrit: citta</i></p>	<p><b>mental objects satipatthana</b></p> <p><b>aware of the objects within ones mind</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) words, concepts, ideas</li> <li>2) perspectives, views, thoughts</li> <li>3) images, symbols</li> </ol> <p><i>Pali: dhamma Sanskrit: dharma</i></p>

<sup>1</sup> Bodily feeling or sensation (Pali: kayika vedana)

<sup>2</sup> Spiritual feeling (Pali: niramisa vedana). An example: Sensitive to the plight of others, one feels pain when one sees them in difficulty. Or regret when one realises one has caused harm.

<sup>3</sup> Worldly feeling (Pali: samisa vedana. An example: Seeing an object one is attracted to when in a greedy state of mind one experiences pleasure at the thought of acquiring it and pain at the thought of being denied it.

<sup>4</sup> Pali: cetasa vedana. An example: One makes a judgement about how ones life is going and if the judgement is positive one experiences elation but if it is negative one experiences depression.

# 'Stalker' - a cinematic metaphor for mindfulness

General



## "The Zone"

I wanted to find a poetic metaphor to express the spirit of the practice of mindfulness, and I think I found one in the 1970s Russian film *Stalker*. Directed by Andrei Tarkovski, it is a powerful and mysterious film, the meaning of which is not that immediately accessible. The story is set in an industrial decaying landscape, within which is a mysterious large area of land called 'The Zone', a place deserted of people yet protected by guards with machine guns. *Stalker* is the main character in the film. He is like a guide. He smuggles people into "The Zone". At the centre of "The Zone" is a derelict room. People want to enter the room because they have heard that on entering it one's innermost wishes are fulfilled. But the path through "The Zone" is hazardous. It looks innocuous enough, just a derelict industrial landscape that is also part nature. But *Stalker* warns the companions he is guiding to the room: a writer called *Writer*, and a scientist called *Scientist*, it is not innocuous at all. He pleads with them for caution. He says -

'The Zone is a very complex maze of traps. All of them are death traps. I don't know what happens in the absence of humans, but as soon as humans appear, everything begins to move. Former traps disappear. New traps appear. Safe ways become impassable, and the way becomes now easy, now confused beyond words. This is the Zone. It might seem capricious. But at each moment it's just as we've made it by our state of mind. I won't hide the fact that some people had to turn back half way. There were some who perished on the very threshold of the room. But everything that happens here depends not on the Zone but on us.'

So, mysteriously, "The Zone" is more than just a landscape, it is responsive to the attitude one brings to it. This is the first link with mindfulness in buddhism. We need to be mindful of the ordinary world of objects we move about in, the ordinary landscape. But our happiness also depends on our attitude, our internal landscape. Our state of mind. Getting into 'The Zone' isn't easy. The three men run the gauntlet of guards with machine guns. They are shot at, but get through. They then travel deep into "The Zone" on a motorised railway cart. Getting off, they begin to make their way through the landscape. It is almost constantly raining. Rusty shapes jut out, and are reflected in muddy pools of water. There is water everywhere, but nobody else there. *Stalker* has the experience of "The Zone" but as he says, it is constantly changing. So they need a way of testing if the way ahead is safe. He gets the others to tie bandages to metal nuts to be thrown ahead of them, to test the safety of their intended path. Early on in this the *Writer* gets impatient with all caution and not quite believing *Stalker*, pushes ahead on his own, but stopping, sensing something is wrong, he then slowly comes back. He was lucky *Stalker* said, the Zone had warned him. The men do eventually reach the room after an extremely roundabout journey. Tarkovski's metaphysical water-drenched and very beautiful cinema we could say is a film about the quest for happiness. The buddhist path is also about that. Like getting through "The Zone", it isn't straightforward. Progress in life is never straightforward. The metaphor of *Stalker* constantly checking the way by throwing the nut we can take into life and into buddhist practice. Life and conditions are ever shifting and the best we can do about that is to keep checking what the current situation is (both the externals - those beyond our control, and the internals - our state of mind). That is the best we can do, and that is the buddhist practice of mindfulness. That is our best chance for happiness.

## Life is not Linear

The fact that the Zone is constantly changing is a very much like life. Life isn't linear. It isn't that we do A and B, and it gives us C. Life is much more complex and unpredictable than that. *Stalker* throws a nut before each new move forward to carefully test the response of the Zone to that move, as it is here, in the moment. He doesn't assume things now are as they were. Each step brings a new situation, to be gauged, checked out. The same care informs the practice of mindfulness. *Stalker* says the Zone is 'not a place for a stroll'. Likewise buddhism says that samsara, conditioned existence, the world as we know it, is like being in a burning house that we need to get out of. Yet the burning is caused by attachment, and we can overcome that if we are mindful. Unhooking our attachments is possible



but it takes consistent care and attention over a long period of time. Mindfulness then is the path of great care, leading to the 'room of nirvana', where our happiness will never be lost. To be really safe in the world, and not as Stalker says, fall into death traps, we need to be safe in our mindfulness.

## **Guides**

We also have to judge for ourselves the right path to happiness. What we want to be our guide. In a way we are all surrounded by potential guides, potential Stalkers. Each philosophy or religion claiming to bring us happiness is one. Every advertising hoarding, every religious guru is one. But which do we go with? Some might offer a seductively easy path, which then turns out to be a 'death trap'. Buddhism isn't the easy path. It is about looking directly at life, with awareness. So even though life is unpredictable, we can still get somewhere in it with care and attention. Because we are being careful within that unpredictability, we are safer, because we are in a way expecting it.

## **The Basis for Action**

When Stalker wants to test a particular way through the "Zone" is safe, he throws the nut. Throwing the nut is a metaphor for being careful. Being careful to bring awareness to the situation. Bringing mindfulness is like plumbing the depths. When we drop a line with a stone attached to it into water, we know how deep the water is by when the line goes slack. We have a firm basis for action then, when we want to wade into the water. Mindfulness is like this. We know better through mindfulness what we are stepping into. We know the terrain and we have more information about the future. The better information we have like this before setting off, the safer we are likely to be. We cannot assume the world is still the same as it was two minutes ago, and without mindfulness we cannot know what it has become. Things will probably have changed in that time, we too will have changed. Mindfulness gives us that information. It doesn't assume things have stayed the same, but helps us keep checking on the situation as it is before we move forward.

## **Mindfulness**

Life in The Zone is unpredictable. Life is unpredictable. And we are unpredictable. In the buddhist view of the world each and every 'thing' is at the centre of a complex web of conditions which impact on it, and condition it from moment to moment. That applies to anything we can think of, in what we call conditioned existence, the world outside of enlightened consciousness, the only thing not conditioned by anything else. So, we have one 'thing' one moment, but as its external conditions constantly change, a few moments later there is something else, either slightly or vastly different. The person we believed ourselves to be just one moment ago now no longer exists. The world of a moment ago also is no longer there. In fact everything now is subtly changed from how it was a moment ago. Whatever information we have about ourselves and the world from a moment ago now is out of date. If we base our actions on old information, they will be based on unreliable premises and so possibly lead to suffering. So to be mindful, we have to keep checking the new situation at each new moment, in order to be safe. Just as Stalker checks the safety of the way forward at each stage of progress through "the Zone" by throwing the nut ahead of him, we need to check with mindfulness what is happening in our "Zone". In fact we have four "Zones" to contend with, four things to bring mindfulness to, the four satipatthanas. They are where the Buddha suggests we place our mindfulness. For example let's take the first satipatthana, we can it that as a "Zone", the "Body Zone". We might ask - what is the state of my body now? Have I tensed up since a moment ago. Do I need to relax? Or the "Feeling Zone" What am I feeling now? The "Heart Zone". What is my state of mind? Or the "Mental Objects Zone" What are my views about this? We can ask - do they have a safe destination in that "Zone"? Do they lead to a good future in it, or a death-trap? If we keep bringing mindfulness to these four "Zones", we will have real up to date information to base our actions upon. If we know as much as we can, about what we can, and be as ready as we can be to deal with the unpredictable.

## **Mindfulness and Taking Care**

Mindfulness really is an intimate act. It is bringing ourselves closer to our experience in a caring way. When we care about things we tend to treat them appropriately, so mindfulness is not really a distanced thing. When we care about something, we are interested in knowing about its nature, and that includes knowing what it can and cannot do, just like in a craftsman's attitude to his materials. This is true for material things, but it is also true for people. When we see people are sensitive to their experience, for example, we will be more careful about harming them.

**clear  
comprehension**

## Sati and Sampajana

What people think about as mindfulness is not only *sati*. *Sati* is mentioned in the *Satipatthana Sutta* and many other places in conjunction with a second term - *sampajana*. The text says 'the practitioner contemplates each *satipatthana* in certain ways: they are ardent (*atapi*), fully aware (*sampajana*) and mindful (*satima*).<sup>1</sup> *Sati* and *sampajana* are often expressed together as a compound *sati-sampajana*.

*Sampajana* has been translated in various ways, as 'mindfulness of purpose', 'clear comprehension', and 'full consciousness.' But can we go a bit deeper into what these interpretations might mean and how they fit with each other. Etymologically, *sampajana* can be broken down into *sam* - complete, together, and *pajana* - from *pra* + *aja*, meaning 'to drive, urge on' (also *pacana*, a goad). It therefore means something like 'a combination of all the factors that urge or drive us on.' And what is it that drives us? It is the various ideas we have about the way things are, the objects in our mind we are attracted to and feel will make us happy. We are obviously driven on by our sense of purpose. This is *sampajana* in the narrow sense. But we are also driven by our overall perspective, by our general sense of comprehension. We act on that as well. Hence *sampajana* has both a broad and a narrow sense. In the broad sense it is about our vision of life, our perspective, what we think we can achieve, our comprehension of life. In the narrow sense it is about what we are doing right now, our purpose. This explains the different interpretations of *sampajana*.

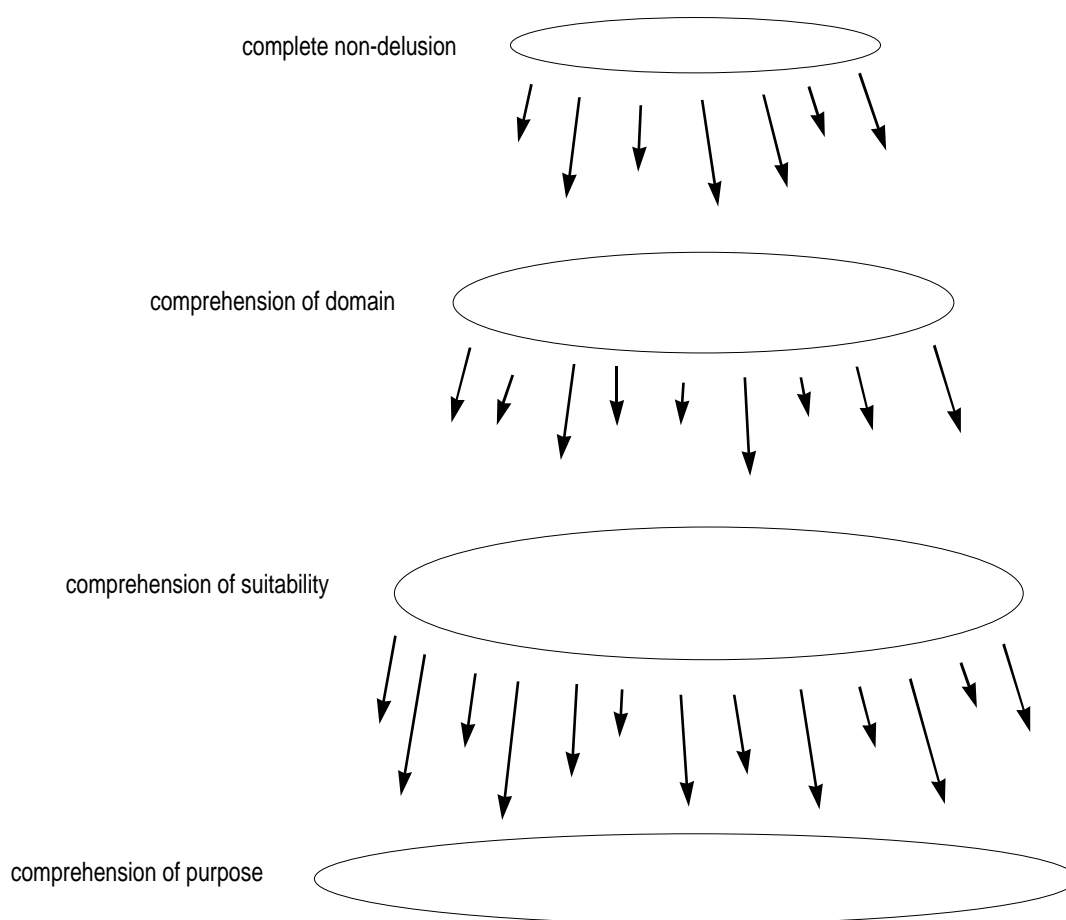
Our vision conditions what we bring mindfulness to (and likewise what we obsess about.) The literal meaning of *sati* is memory or recollection, non-forgetfulness<sup>2</sup>, so when a person has a vision that is important to them, they need to keep remembering it. The implication being if they are mindful, they will remember it. In this way there is more to mindfulness than simply 'bare attention.'

<sup>1</sup> Bodhi, B. (1995) *The middle length discourses of the Buddha: a translation of the Majjhima Nikaya*. Boston: Wisdom. p145

<sup>2</sup> Sangharakshita (1990) *Vision and Transformation: an introduction to the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications. p123

## The 'Comprehension Cascade'

In fact we can see the relationship between the broader and narrower aspects of *sampajana* if we look at how the Buddha understood things at enlightenment, which is expressed in a hierarchy of four kinds of *sampajana*, which form a kind of 'cascade of comprehension.' At enlightenment, the Buddha attained the highest level of comprehension, *asammoha sampajana* - complete non-delusion. This is the most general level of comprehension. He comprehended clearly how things were, in a way we struggle to imagine. We can think of the other 'levels' of comprehension as falling out like a cascade from this basic level. What cascaded out from complete non-delusion was comprehension of domain - *gocara sampajana*. He expressed his insight into the nature of reality conceptually in terms of



*praticcasamutpada* or Conditioned Coproduction: that everything arises in dependence on conditions. Comprehension of domain is seeing clearly conditions. He expressed this to the ascetic Bahiya as 'in the seen, there will be only the seen, in the heard only the heard, in the cognized only the cognized.' There is the condition of seeing, the condition of hearing, the condition of cognizing. There is only these conditions (and all the other conditions in the universe). There is nothing behind them. No power driving them. No hand guiding them. But they are there, and they are affecting each other. Clear comprehension of domain is seeing each condition as the condition it is. It is seeing a thought as a *thought*, a feeling as a *feeling*. Each 'domain' (seeing, hearing, cognizing) is a distinct and separate domain to itself not to be confused with the others. *Gocara* literally means 'pasture,' as in a cow's grazing (*go* being 'cow' and *cara* is

to go.) This gives a sense that one needs to be aware of the place ones awareness is feeding on. That one is in the right 'domain' to get the information one needs. Which leads to the next cascade. Clear comprehension of domain cascades down to 'clear comprehension of suitability - *sappaya sampajana*.' Seeing clearly the various 'domains' we can then be clear about the conditions needed for - what conditions 'suit' - the development of each 'domain.' If we want to think clearly, what conditions suit thinking clearly? A stable meditation posture? A clear conscience? The Buddha would see all this very clearly. And finally, clear comprehension of suitability cascades down to 'clear comprehension of purpose or usefulness - *satthaka sampajana*.' Knowing what conditions need to be developed, we are motivated to act on that knowledge. This is comprehension at its simplest, comprehending why we are doing something, comprehending our aim, mindfulness of purpose. *Satthaka* is essentially connected with the notion of reaching a result. The prefix *sa-* means 'with, possessed of,' and *attha* (Skt. *artha*) means 'meaning, attainment, gain, welfare.' *Satthaka sampajana* could be translated as 'clear comprehension with an eye to welfare', or 'clear comprehension of the result one is trying to attain.'

The Buddha's 'mindfulness of purpose' *arises out of* a completely undeluded perspective. The difference with the unenlightened is we are more 'upside down' in comparison. We tend to charge into activity being very aware of our purpose, but not of the higher levels of comprehension. We often use quite *unsuitable* even harmful methods, and concentrate our energy on activities that from an enlightened perspective are a *deluded* waste of time, like amassing wealth and subduing enemies.

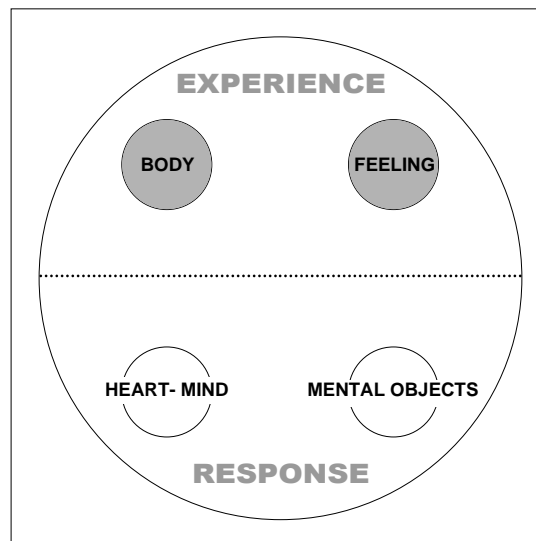
## Comprehension within Different Contexts

As comprehension is really about perspective, the degree of comprehension we need will differ in different contexts. If we are aiming to use mindfulness as a tool to alleviate stress, our comprehension will only need to go as far as what helps that to happen. If however we are aiming for *Nirvana* our comprehension will need to go much further (be much broader), ultimately as far as *asammoha sampajana* - complete non-delusion (the broadest perspective possible.) So another way of discriminating between various contexts is by identifying the level of *sampajana* required with that context.

# The Four Satipatthanas as Four 'Domains'

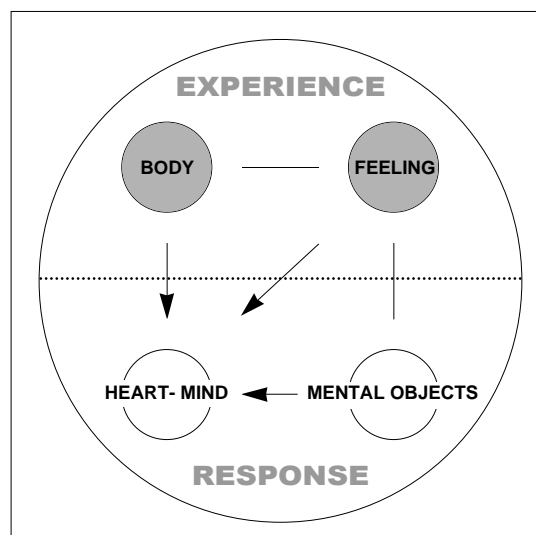
Why did the Buddha talk about mindfulness in terms of the four *satipatthanas*? He clearly comprehended them in terms of four domains (Fig. 1) to be differentiated. Remember about 'contemplating the body in the body (not in feelings)' That would involve clearly comprehending which domain is body and which is feelings. I suggest though that first he would see the difference between the domain of experience and the domain of responses to experience. Then within these domains would be the sub-domains of body and feelings in the case of experience and heart-mind and objects present in the mind in the case of responses to experience.

**Fig. 1 The Four Satipatthanas as Domains**



Having seen the four satipatthanas clearly as domains, he would then be aware of how whatever was going on in any domain would be conditioned by what was going on in the other three domains. For instance, if one was looking to cultivate the state of mind of kindliness, what condition 'suited' that in terms of ones bodily experience, feelings and the perspective among ones mental objects (Fig. 2.) It would be helped by a lack of distraction from bodily discomforts, an ethical sensitivity to the plight of beings, and an accurate vision of their plight.

**Fig. 2 Comprehension of Suitability**



# **alternate teachings on mindfulness**



## Sangharakshita's Levels of Awareness

My teacher Sangharakshita founded the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order in 1967. At the time he gave a series of lectures on the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path, one of which was on Perfect Mindfulness. In that lecture <sup>1</sup> he didn't explore mindfulness as is usual in terms of the four foundations of mindfulness but instead expressed a teaching of his own called the four 'levels of awareness.' This has at other times been called the four 'dimensions of awareness.' It involves awareness of 'Things,' awareness of 'Self:' namely 'Body, Feelings and Thoughts,' awareness of 'Others,' and awareness of 'Reality.' When asked by a disciple <sup>2</sup> how he thought his 'levels of awareness' fitted in with the four foundations he replied that the dimensions were more comprehensive, and in fact that they included the satipatthanas. Two new elements he included were *awareness of other people* and *awareness of one's environment and nature*.

'there are many passages in the Pali Canon which go to show that those forms of mindfulness, though not actually enumerated in the formula, were certainly not to be neglected.....monks were not allowed to travel in the rainy season because they might tread on crops. And that we can hardly behave ethically towards other people unless we are aware of them as sentient beings.....It is not that the four foundations are excluded, it's more that they are incorporated into a more comprehensive, albeit not as a formulation, traditional, formulation.'<sup>2</sup>

Sangharakshita says he didn't confine himself to the traditional four foundations because he considered it important to mention the new elements he includes in his 'dimensions of awareness'.<sup>3</sup> He says that perhaps traditionally these might have been taken for granted. The Buddha and his disciples after all lived in nature and would be very aware of it. Also the Buddha speaks very clearly about *kalyana mitrata* or spiritual friendship as being important. But in modern times these emphases are not the case. He says therefore that 'he is carrying the process of systematization a bit further, that's all especially in view of our particular needs here and now, in the twentieth century in the West,' ...'he has made what is implicit explicit'...and 'what the Buddha expressed in terms of spiritual friendship was expressed here in terms of awareness.'<sup>4</sup>

It is legitimate for a teacher to express different formulations if he sees unheeded 'domains' that need to be emphasized, and Sangharakshita is doing such a thing in this case. In fact *awareness of other people* is clearly an aspect of the development of citta. Similarly *awareness of one's environment and nature* can be technically subsumed under the development of the body *satipatthana* in its external aspect, but even still, it may be spiritually efficacious to draw out these aspects for one's students by creating a novel teaching such as the 'levels of awareness,' as Sangharakshita has done.

<sup>1</sup> Sangharakshita (1990) *Vision and Transformation: An introduction to the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path*. Birmingham: Windhorse.

<sup>2</sup> Sangharakshita. (1983) Noble Eightfold Path - Questions and Answers Tuscany 1983 (Downloadable pdf file p52) Retrieved October 30, 2009, from Freebuddhistaudio.com website: <http://freebuddhistaudio.com/texts/seminars>

<sup>3</sup> Sangharakshita. (1985) Noble Eightfold Path - Questions and Answers with Study Leaders 1985 (Downloadable pdf file p153) Retrieved October 30, 2009, from Freebuddhistaudio.com website: <http://freebuddhistaudio.com/texts/seminars>

<sup>4</sup> ibid.



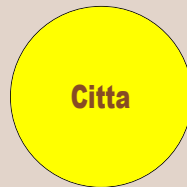
# Conditionality

I talked earlier about the Buddha's experience of complete non-delusion, and how this 'cascaded down' to clear comprehensions of domain and suitability. Another way of putting this is, he saw the truth about conditionality. Also called *Conditioned Coproduction* or *Dependent Origination* (Pali: *Pratīca Samutpada*, Sanskrit: *Pratītya Samutpada*), it is the basic conceptual worldview of buddhism, its bottom line conceptual system. It states that everything arises in dependence on conditions. Before he became a Buddha, the Buddha-to-be Siddhartha set out to solve the problem of human suffering. *Conditioned Coproduction* represents his eventual insight into that problem expressed conceptually. He saw that throughout what buddhism later called 'conditioned existence,' - the normal world of experience - everything was the result of a set of conditions. Nothing stood alone and independent of conditions. At its simplest, this teaching was summed up in a four line formula:

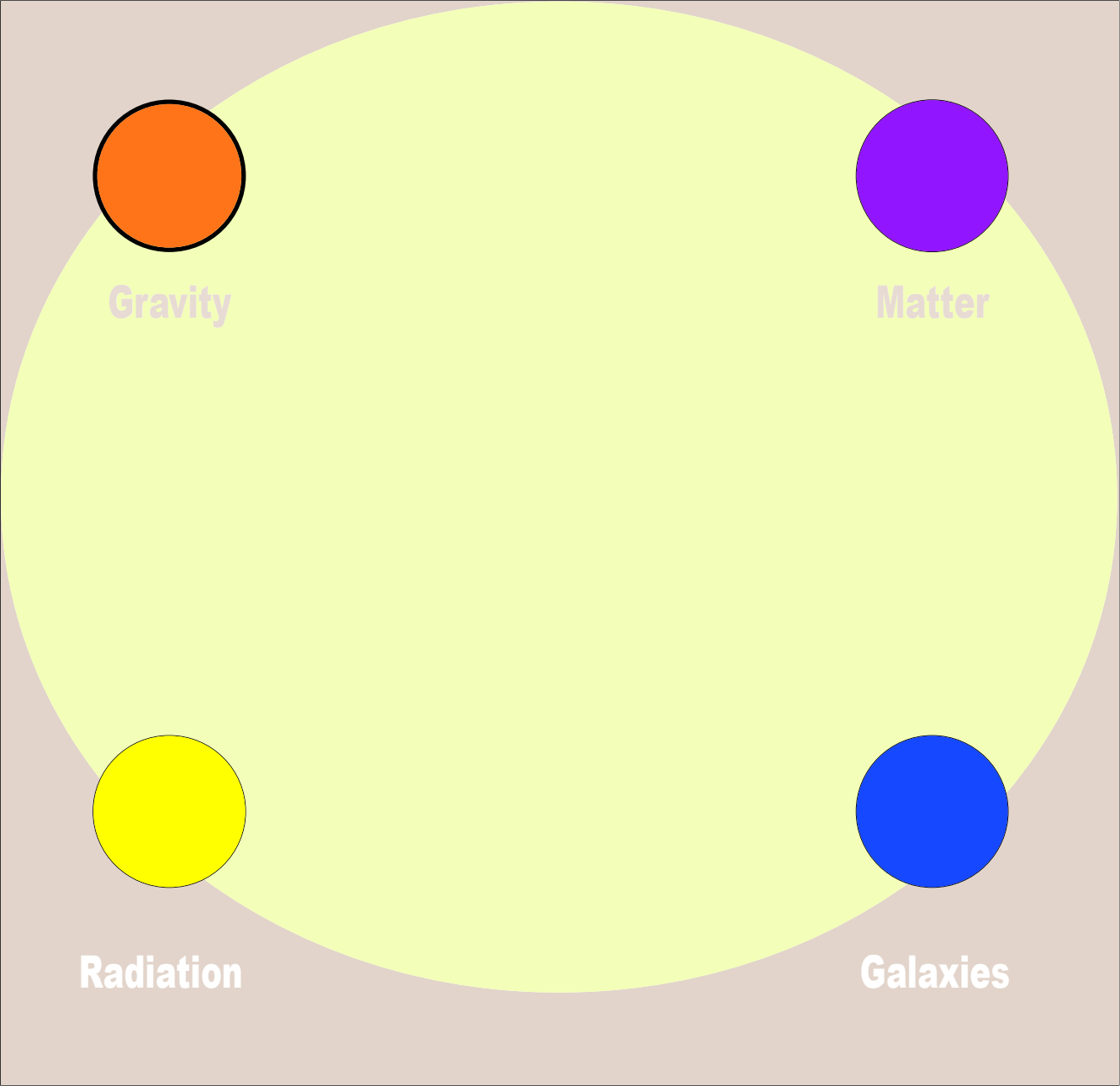
This being, that becomes,  
From the arising of this, that arises  
This not being, that does not become  
From the cessation of this, that ceases.

This formula expresses *Conditioned Coproduction* at its most basic level. It was later developed into more elaborate teachings such as the twelve links (*nīdanas*) of the chain of causality as expressed in the Wheel of Life. However Conditionality is not limited to these twelve links. They only express an example of it. In fact conditionality is universally applicable, as we see in the following pages.

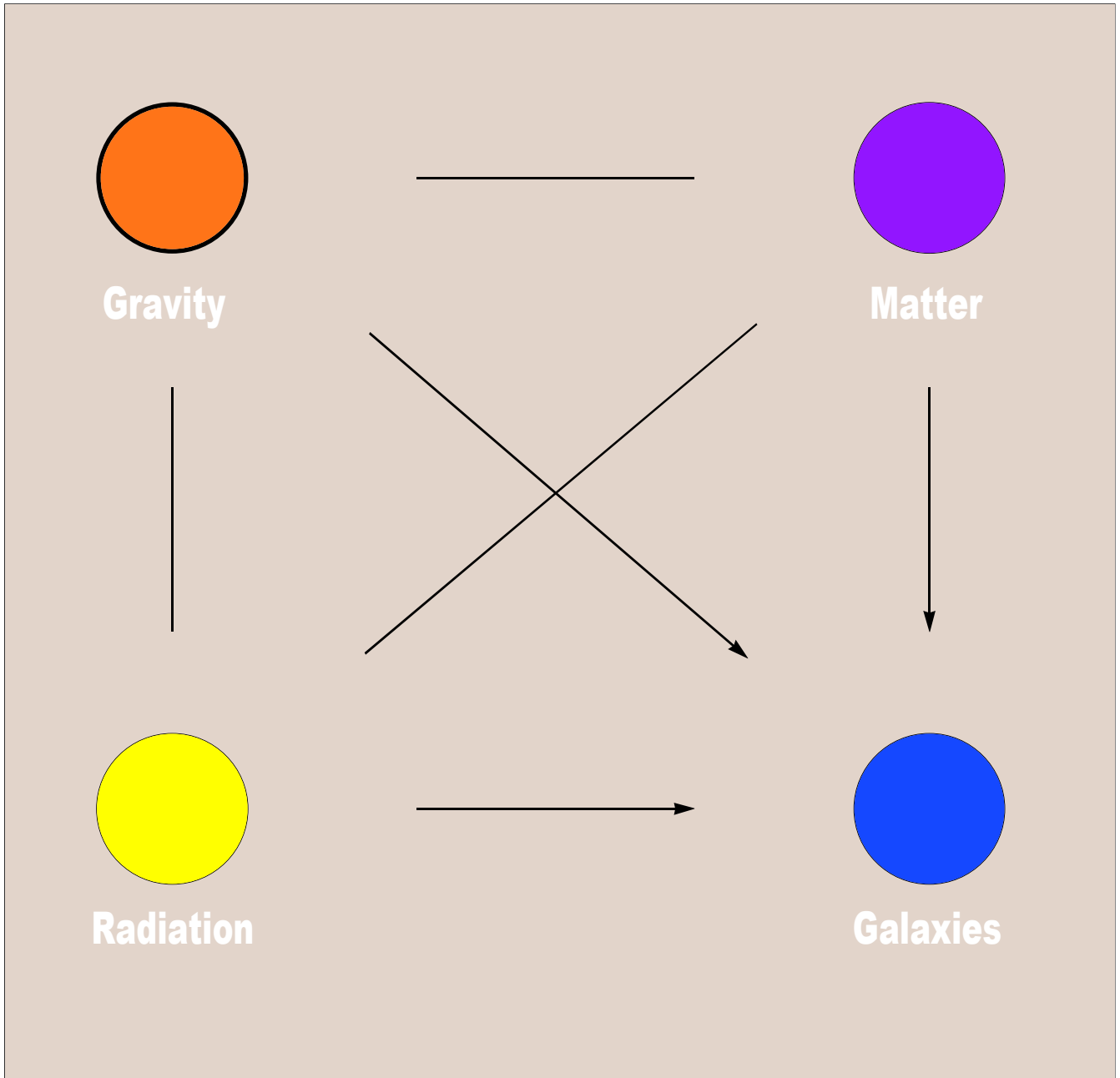
# **Conditioned Coproduction applies to cosmology**



Cosmology



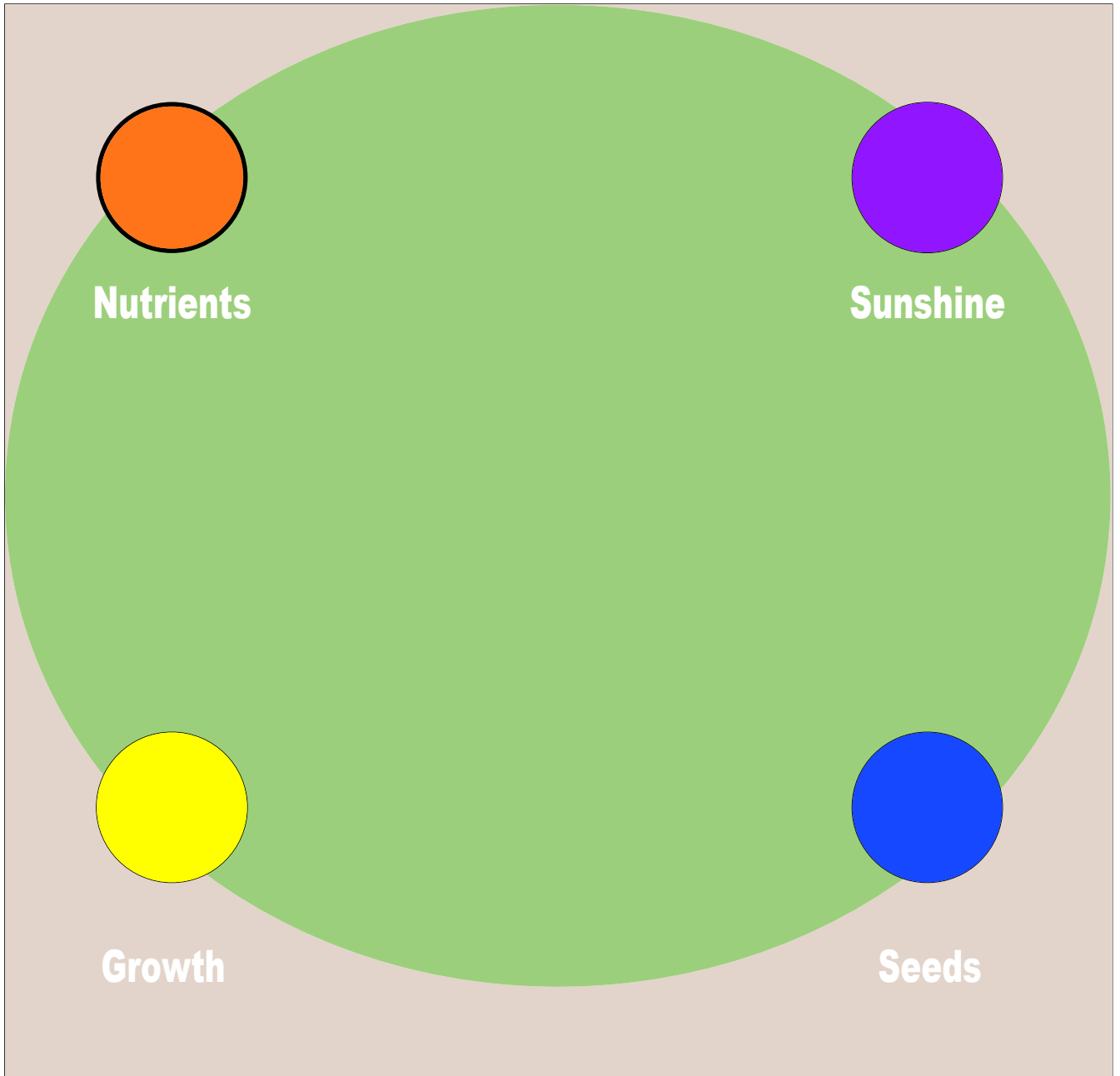
# Cosmology



**It applies to biology**

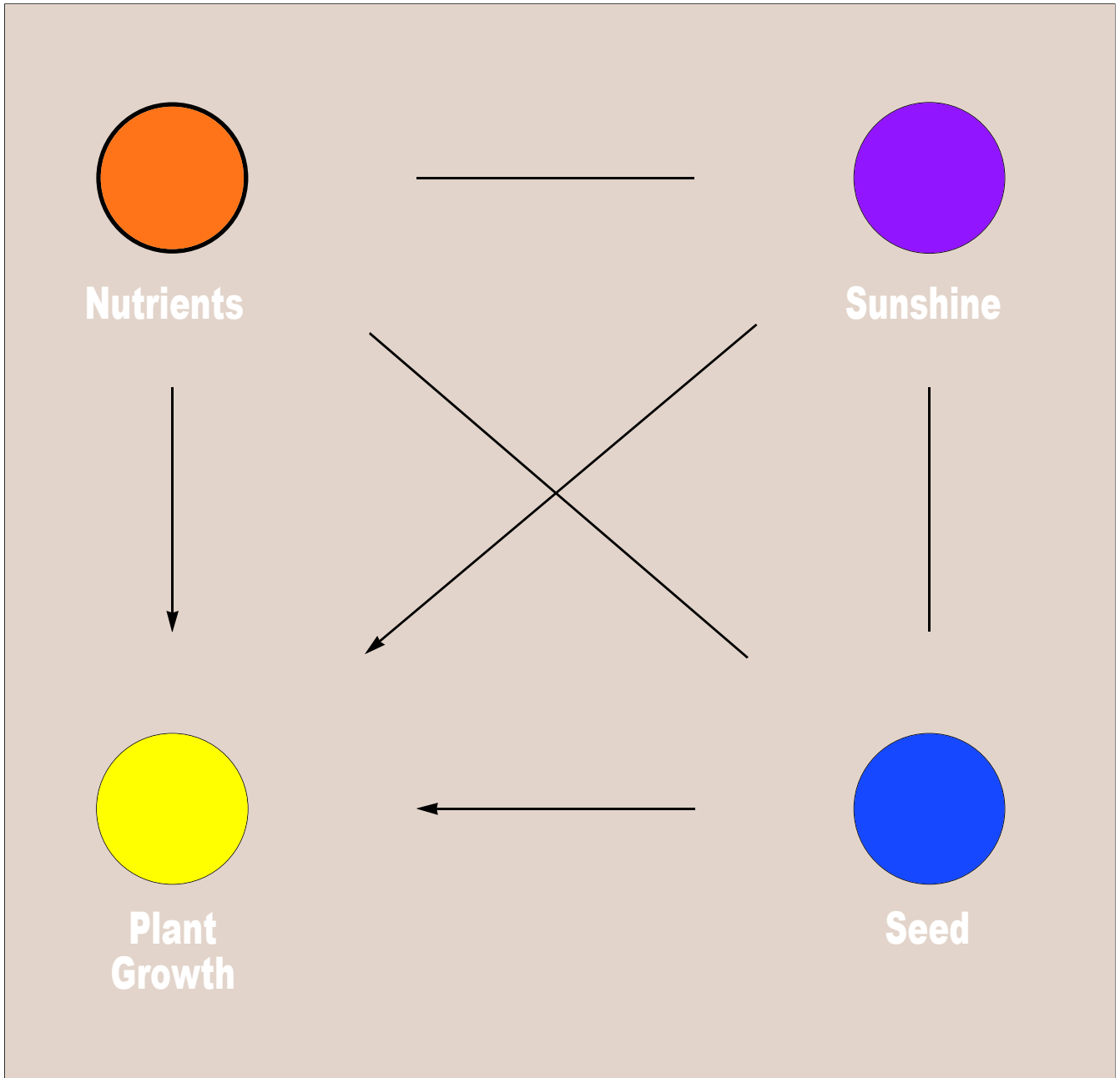


# Biology





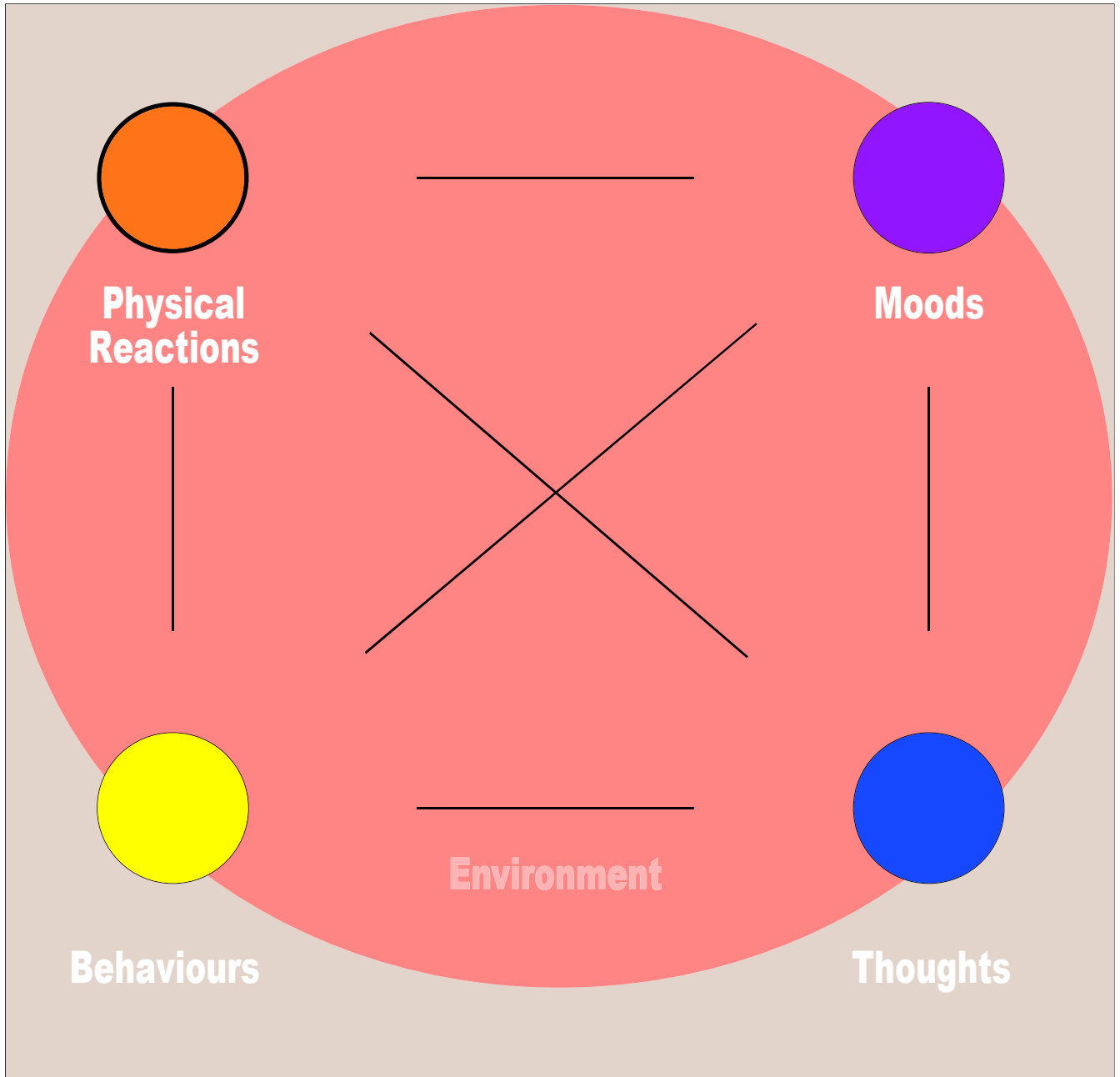
# Biological Processes



**It applies to psychology**



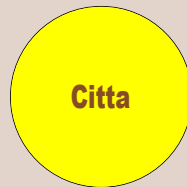
# Cognitive Model



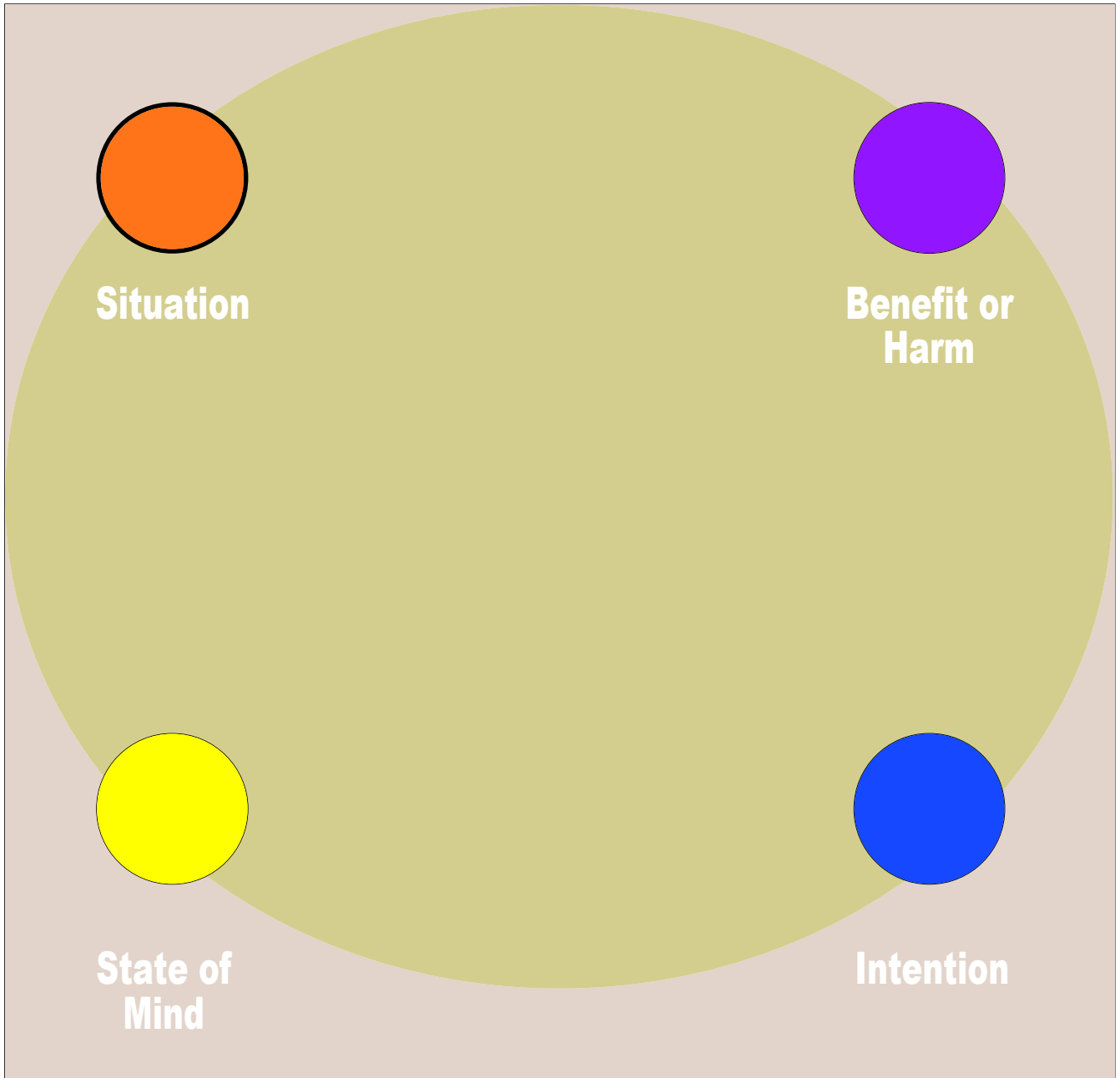
## Processes - Cognitive Therapy



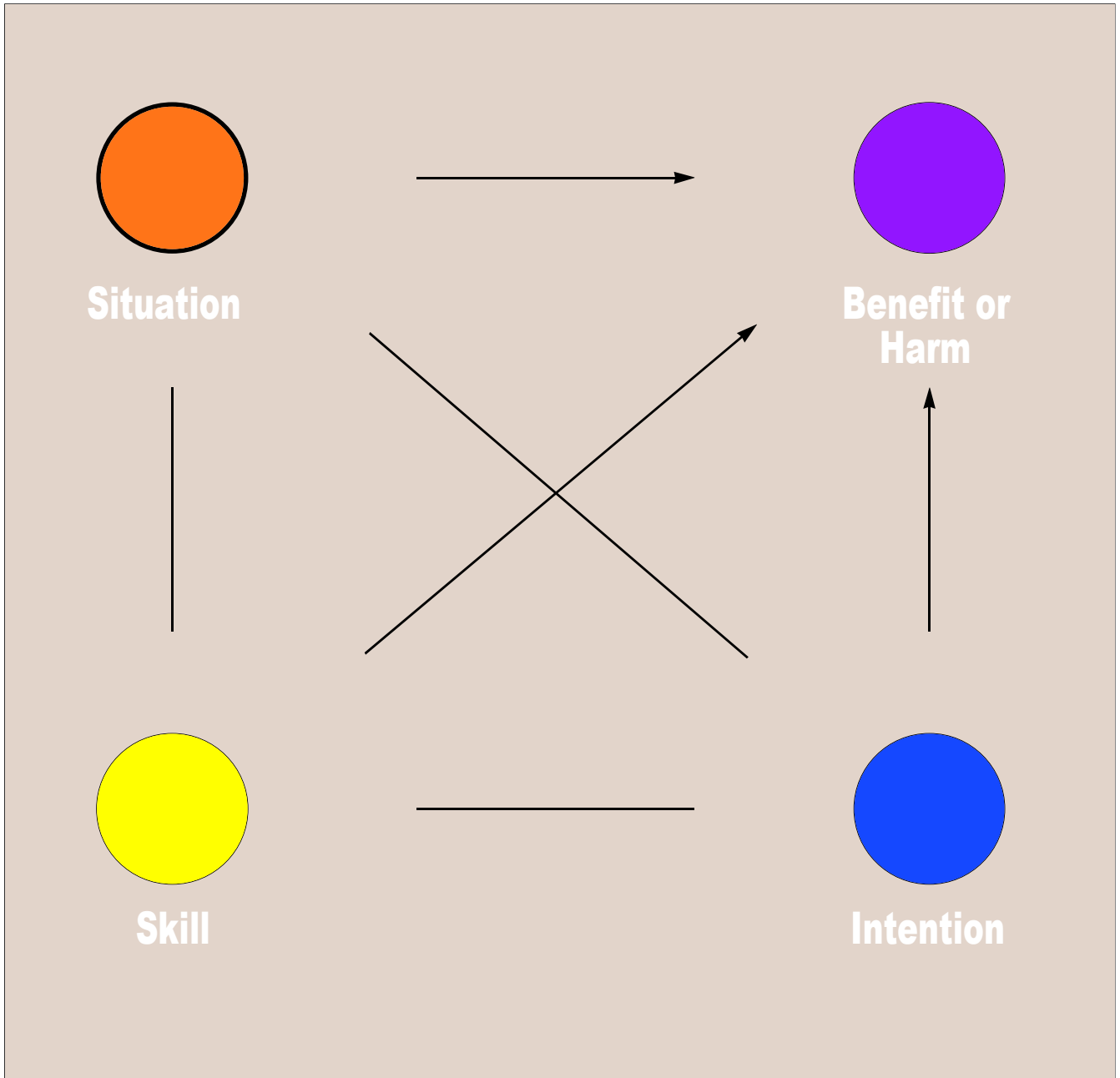
**It applies to ethics**



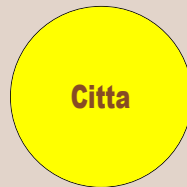
# Ethics



# Ethics

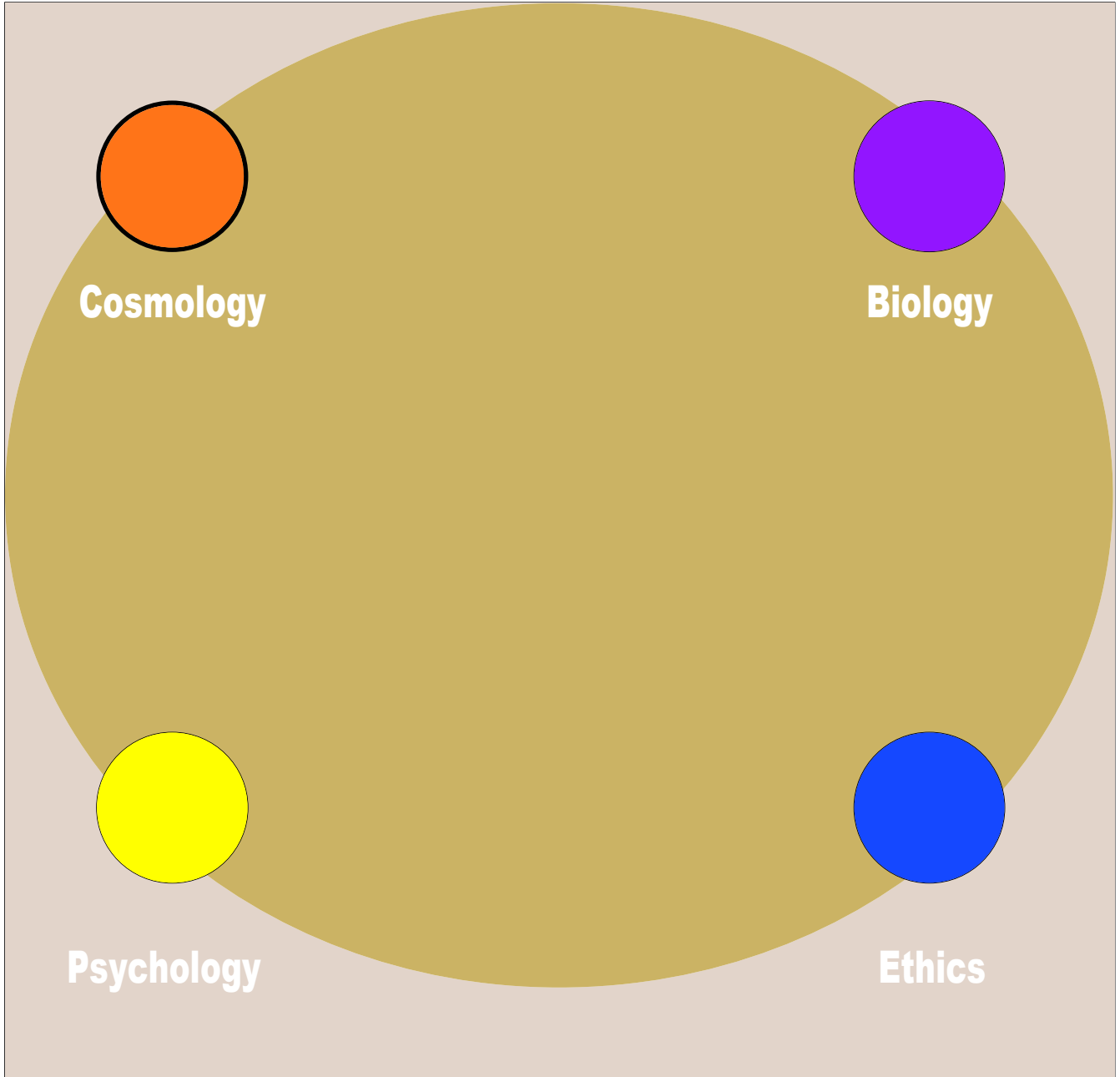


# **Conditioned Coproduction is a universal principle**





# Universal Principle



## Conditionality - The Twelve Links

The most well known application of conditionality is the twelve links or *nīdānas*. In Theravada buddhism *pratīca samutpada* is often solely identified with these links instead of being seen as a general principle. In the Tibetan tradition the twelve links were developed into the symbolic image called the Wheel of Life. On the Wheel of Life the links are said to take place over three lives: past, present and future (Fig.1). But we shouldn't take too narrow a view. The Wheel is a model that is meant to illustrate the principle of karma and rebirth. One Theravada monk, Nanavira, argues that we can see each of the twelve links in the present life. Logically, this must be the case. Take feeling. We have experienced feeling in the past, experience it now in the present, and will experience it in the future. It is common sense that each link could in theory be present in each time-zone. What is really important is the sequence.

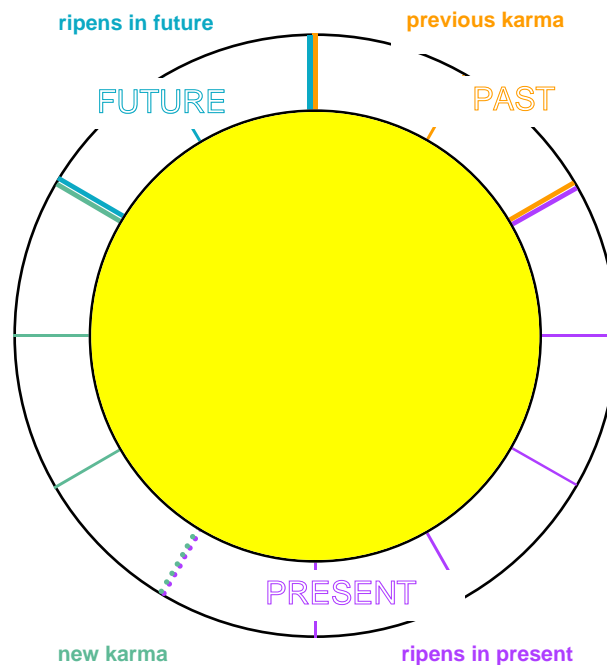


Fig.1 Distribution over Three Lives

But taking the traditional Theravada view for now. Of Conditioned Coproduction being spread over three lives. In that model there are two *nīdānas* in the past life: ignorance and karma formations (Fig.2a). These are the responses we had in the past to previous experience- how we assessed that experience and the kind of life we constructed - which have set up certain conditions for our present life - certain dispositions that will tend to carry on. Then in the present (Fig.2b) we experience the fruits (*vipaka*). We are born with a certain type of consciousness in a particular body that is in contact in a particular way with a world of sense and that generates a certain set of feelings. In the present moment we respond to that experience (Fig.2c) and through that set up future conditions in the future (Fig.2d).

The Theravada view that Conditioned Coproduction is always tied to the twelve links and spread over three lives works to illustrate karma and rebirth, but taken too literally may in fact get in the way of a more principal look at Conditioned Coproduction. The early formula only says "This being, that becomes; this not being, that does not become" and applies not just to the twelve links, but to any processes that exist, including those within a system like the four foundations of mindfulness.

Present Life -  
 3 Consciousness  
 4 Name and Form  
 5 The Six Sense Spheres  
 6 Contact  
 7 Feeling  
 are the **resultant conditions**  
 (vipaka) we find ourselves in from  
 the actions and assessments  
 of our previous life

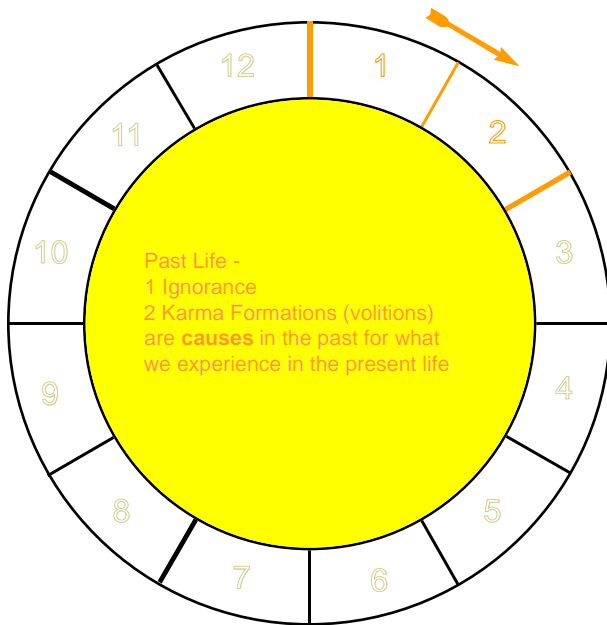


Fig.2a The Twelve Links - Past Life

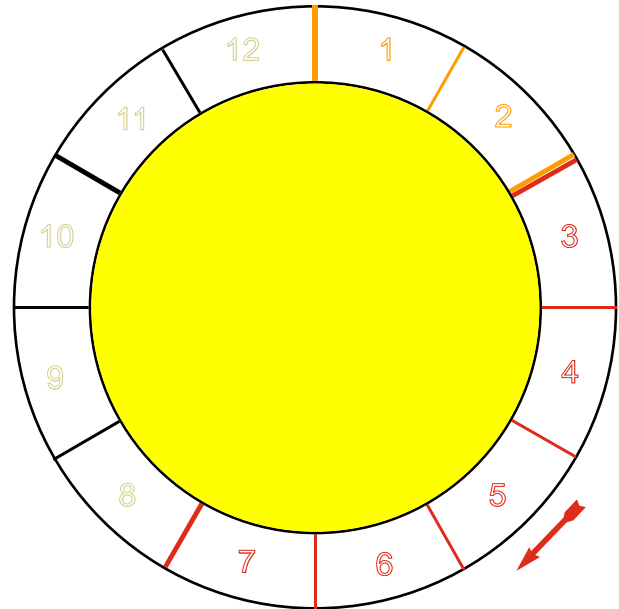


Fig.2b The Twelve Links - Present Life (vipaka)

Present Life -  
 8 Craving  
 9 Grasping  
 10 Becoming  
 are our **actions** (karma) in the  
 present life that set up the onditions  
 for future experience

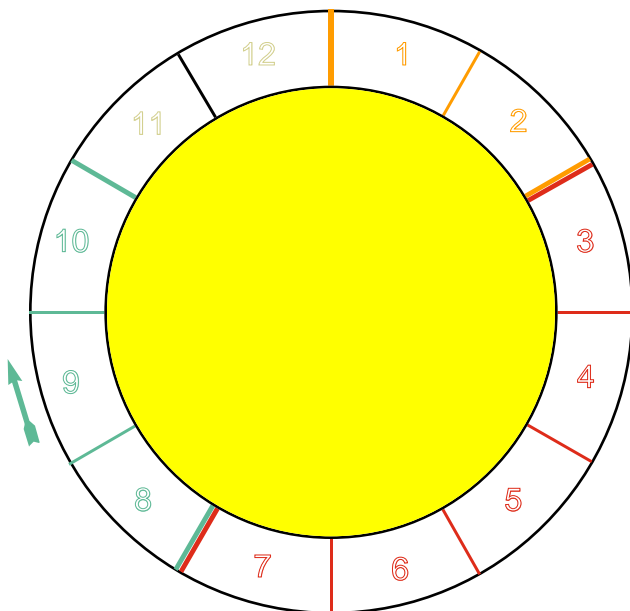


Fig.2c The Twelve Links - Present Life (karma)

Future Life -  
 11 Birth  
 12 Old Age and Death  
 are the **resultant** (vipaka) in the  
 future of the conditions we have set  
 up by the responses we have had  
 in the present moment

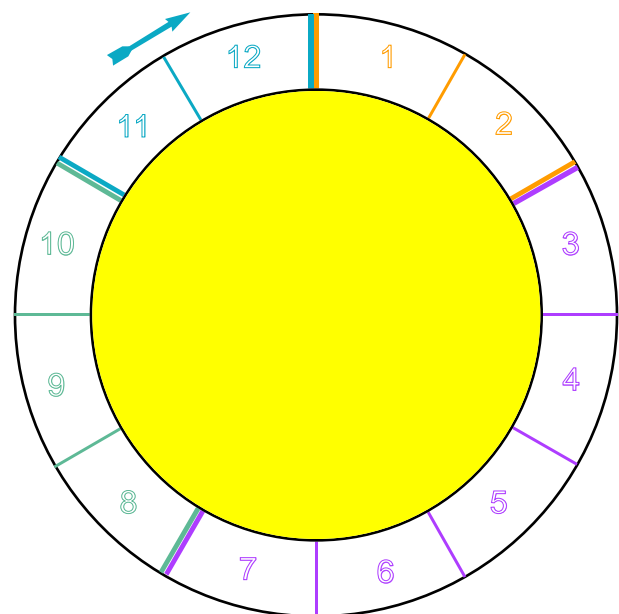


Fig.2d The Twelve Links - Future Life (vipaka)

# Experience and Response - The Two Basic Conditions

On the Wheel of Life the twelve links are divided into *karma* - action, and *karma vipaka* - fruit of action. These are broadly indicative of two basic conditions within conditionality: having experience, and responding to experience.

## Having Experience

What we experience will tend to influence, though other factors may be present, how we respond. In the diagram on the previous page this happens twice (Fig. 3a):

- \* Experience in the present (links 3-7) influences response in the present (links 8-10)
  - for instance an experience of pleasure (7) from an object conditions our craving (8) and grasping (9) at it.
- \* Experience in the future (links 11-12) of birth (11) and death (12) influences further future responses.
  - in the absence of an insightful perspective on birth and death those experiences will tend to condition ignorance (1) rather than wisdom and karmic tendencies, ways of action (2) based on that ignorance.

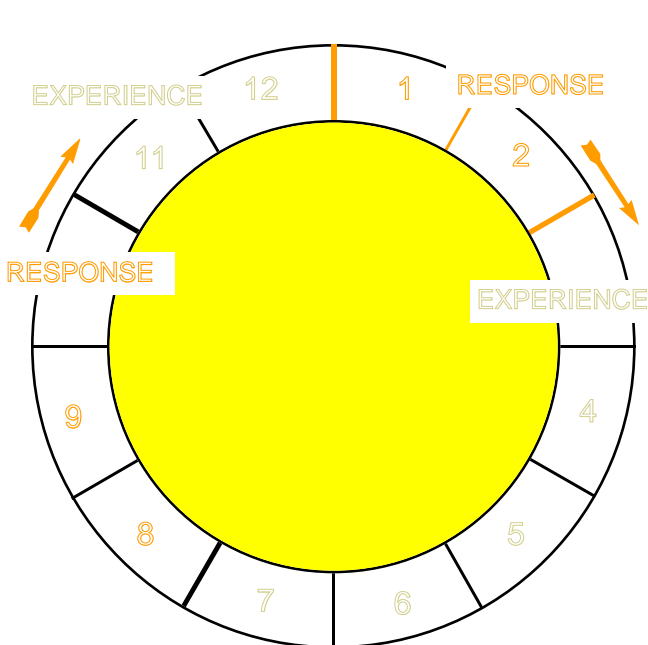


Fig.3a Response conditioning experience

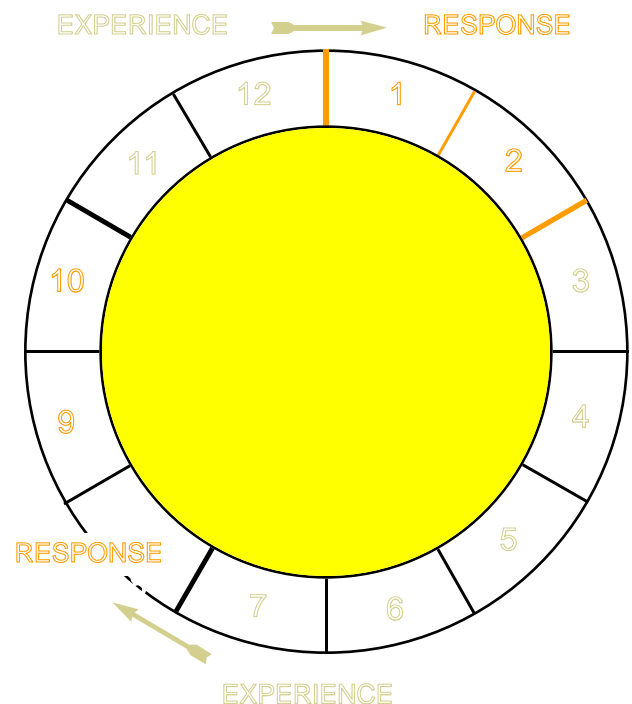


Fig.3b Experience conditioning response

## Having a Response to Experience

How we respond will tend to influence experience. In the diagram this also happens twice (Fig. 3b):

- \* Responses in the past (links 1-2) influence present experience (links 3-7).
  - we reap our previous karma in the kind of mind and body experience we have.
- \* Responses in the present (links 8-10) influence our experience in the future (links 11-12).
  - we set up new karma for the future by our actions now.

## The Four Foundations as Experience and Response

This demonstrates a conditionality at work where experience and response are perpetually conditioning each other. So where do the four foundations of mindfulness fit in with experience or with response? I think body and feeling are experience, and emotional and mental states and objects present in the mind are *responses* to experience. In the twelve links no. 5 is the psychophysical organism, no.6 is contact between it and the world and no.7 is feeling. These are all experience. Link no.8 is craving which is mentioned as a mental state in the Satipatthana Sutta, and link no.1 ignorance is an unenlightened perspective composed of mental objects, as is link no.9 grasping which is partly associated with grasping views. These are all responses to experience.

When we experience something, like a feeling (*vedana* being,...) that tends to influence certain emotional responses (...*citta* becomes), but we always have a choice over those responses. Responses cannot but in one way or another fall into two categories: *karma* and *dharma*. There is how we respond in terms of actions of body, speech and mind (*karma*) and how we respond in terms of having a perspective (*dharma*), and both of these have a conditioning effect on future experience. The list of conditional relationships among the four foundations of mindfulness and the processes associated with them, can be seen in the table overleaf.

# Interactions of Four Foundations

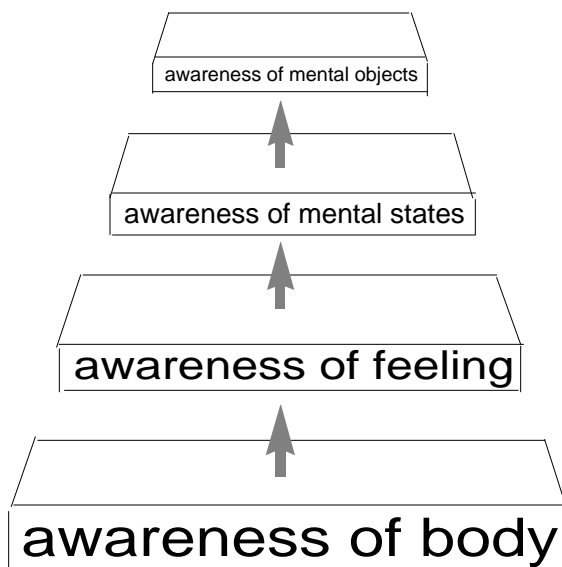
## Interaction between the Satipatthanas and Associated Processes

Primary Condition	Secondary Condition	Associated Process	Comments / examples
<b>Experience co-arising with experience</b>			
<b>BODY</b>	<b>FEELING</b>	<b>SENSATION</b>	e.g. chronic pain
<b>FEELING</b>	<b>BODY</b>	<b>EXPRESSION</b>	e.g. laughing and crying
<b>Response co-arising with response</b>			
<b>MENTAL OBJECTS</b>	<b>HEART-MIND</b>	<b>THOUGHT</b>	mental content gives rise to process of thinking
<b>HEART-MIND</b>	<b>MENTAL OBJECTS</b>	<b>REFLECTION</b>	reflecting on states of mind affects mental contents / views
<b>Experience conditioning response</b>			
<b>BODY</b>	<b>HEART-MIND</b>	<b>AWARENESS</b>	body awareness aids aware, calm, concentrated state of mind
<b>BODY</b>	<b>MENTAL OBJECTS</b>	<b>IDENTITY / INSIGHT</b>	views emerge from experience of tangible in self and world
<b>FEELING</b>	<b>HEART-MIND</b>	<b>EMOTION</b>	heart-mind is moulded by feeling
<b>FEELING</b>	<b>MENTAL OBJECTS</b>	<b>ACCEPTANCE</b>	accepting experience forces change in views about world
<b>Response conditioning experience</b>			
<b>HEART-MIND</b>	<b>BODY</b>	<b>MANIFESTATION</b>	state of mind manifests in tension or relaxation in body
<b>HEART-MIND</b>	<b>FEELING</b>	<b>(UN) ETHICAL SENSITIVITY</b>	ethical state of mind leads to pain of regret when harm is done
<b>MENTAL OBJECTS</b>	<b>BODY</b>	<b>PRACTICAL WISDOM</b>	e.g. guided relaxation or Alexander Technique
<b>MENTAL OBJECTS</b>	<b>FEELING</b>	<b>MOOD</b>	identical to process in cognitive therapy, thoughts affect mood

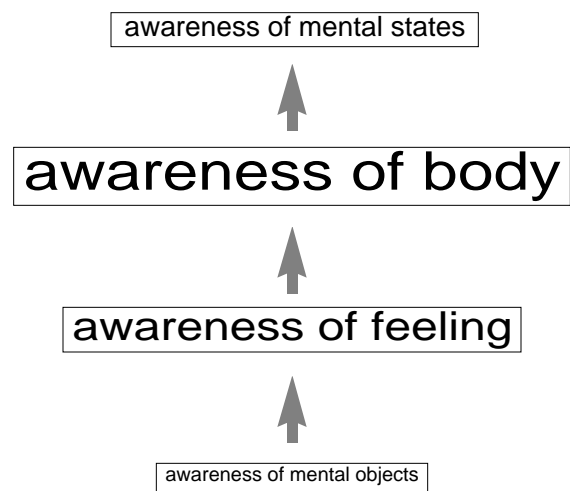
# The Four Foundations 'Sequence'

In the *Satipatthana Sutta* the four foundations of mindfulness are expounded in a sequence which implies one develops the body *satipatthana* first. Then on the basis of that having been developed, one establishes the second *satipatthana*, feeling. And so on. There is value in considering this approach. Starting with bodily awareness, one enters a firm relationship with present moment experience and from there one can better grasp the other foundations. This sequence is how one sets up ones meditation practice (Fig. 1). But as we have just seen in the chart, it should be emphasised that whatever *satipatthana* one develops acts as a foundation for each of the others (Fig.2). For instance if ones perspective is clear (i.e. the *dharmma* *satipatthana* is established) one will know *why* it is important to be aware of feeling (one will be motivated to establish the *vedana* *satipatthana*). In this way, each *satipatthana* can be a foundation in the sense of supporting the others when it is developed. If one *satipatthana* is established, that has a conditioning effect on the establishment of the other *satipatthanas* (Fig.1).

**Fig. 1 The Satipatthana Sutta Supportive Sequence**



**Fig. 2 A Different Supportive Sequence**



If we apply this to the body *satipatthana*, by establishing our awareness on the breath, the more steady our awareness is, i.e. the more concentrated we are in the present moment, the easier it is for us to take on board what we are feeling, or thinking, and how we are responding. Conversely the more scattered we are, the less likely we can take these things in and therefore establish mindfulness of them.





# Passion

T

# **history of development of satipatthana model**

## My History and the 'Cognitive Model'

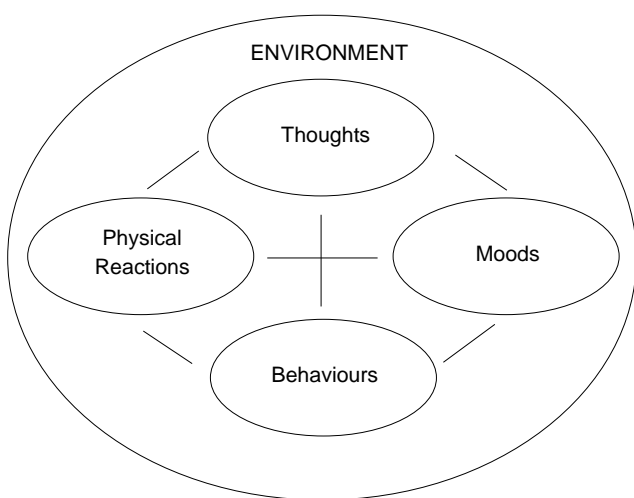
In my work to further the understanding of buddhism and in particular the teaching of the foundations of mindfulness, I have been influenced by a model from Cognitive Therapy, which I called the "Cognitive Model". It originated in 1986, the work of Drs. Christine Padesky and Kathleen Mooney. It was published in 1995 in *Mind over Mood* by Drs. Dennis Greenberger and Christine Padesky.<sup>1</sup>

As the model has contributed substantially to my thinking I will outline briefly here my understanding of it and its history in the development of my ideas.

Mahabodhi

## The Cognitive Model

Five aspects of your life experiences  
1986 Center for Cognitive Therapy, Newport Beach, CA.



Christine Padesky writes about the models development -

"We developed it from our understanding of cognitive therapy blended with our view that human experience is always interactive with the environments in which we live. Today we would refer to it as a biopsychosocial model for understanding human experience. Its strength for use in therapy is that it is descriptive, captures interactions between different aspects of experience, and does not take a stance regarding which must come first: the thought or the mood or the behaviour or the environmental event or the biological response. Sometimes all happen simultaneously, other times one experience leads to another."

What I understand primarily is that each 'aspect of experience' conditions the others. Environment conditions mood, thought condition behaviour, and so on. Paying attention to this overall perspective can help us work more effectively with our moods because if we change any of the others we can change our mood. They are all important, but the most important link for cognitive therapy (and that being the reason why it is called cognitive therapy) is that between thought and mood. By changing our thoughts through socratic questioning of them (by asking what is their truth) we change our mood.

This 'conditionality', applied in the cognitive model to moods, is illustrative of *the* central guiding principle in buddhism, Conditioned Coproduction. As buddhists, in considering phenomena, we too "do not take a stance as to which (in the web of phenomena) should come first". We just work creatively with the conditions that are there, knowing that everything is conditioned by a multiplicity of conditions, including moods and mental states, but beyond that as well.

For the process of acknowledgement it is helpful to outline the history of my involvement with cognitive psychology and the cognitive model.

## My History and Cognitive Psychology

I first came across cognitive psychology in the late 90s because of my friend, Prasadu, who is also a member of the Western Buddhist Order. He is head of psychology at Calderdale Royal Infirmary in the United Kingdom. We used to meet regularly as order members in a peer group. One evening Prasadu did a presentation on cognitive psychology to the group with the quip - "Does this seem familiar?" The notion of core belief underlaying and affecting everything was very much like the buddhist perspective on views. That views are often deeply yet unconsciously held, ubiquitous, and difficult to change. I had a great deal of respect for Prasadu and this led to the first seeds of curiosity being sown in me about cognitive psychology.

Prasadu used to help me deal with the various anxieties I used to experience in therapeutic sessions over the phone. Over time, I built up a 'toolkit' of 'tricks of the trade'. Then, in 2002, I had some formal sessions with him, and was introduced to Christine Padesky's book *Mind Over Mood*. I began using the 'Thought Record'. On seeing the 'cognitive model' on page 4 of *Mind over Mood* a lot of what Prasadu had said fitted for me into a coherent framework. I began to get cognitive therapy. I understood better how what I had been doing had worked. I carried on using the 'cognitive model' as a tool, applying it to my 'life experiences'. That is how I came across the cognitive model personally.

Then, in 2003, feeling a sense of frustration as I had always dreamed one day I would write a book (or come up with an earth shattering theory), and approaching fifty the dream was nowhere in sight, I thought I had better begin on my dream before it was too late, so with money from friends and family, I began to write a book, which was initially on ritual which was what I was most known for. But I was a physics graduate, and still had a certain mindset towards 'grand unified theory' so after several months of writing the remit of the book started to broaden. At first I added meditation. I also wanted to include the "cognitive model" because I had found it so practically useful (and also because it demonstrated conditionality practically). I had other aims too, like to help clarify the confusion that people in my movement often seemed to have between feelings and actions.

All this made me look for a framework I could use to hang all this on and an obvious one was the teaching of the four foundations of mindfulness (the four satipatthanas). In a buddhist scripture called the *Satipatthana Sutta* the Buddha expounds them as *the four things* we should build a 'foundation of awareness (sati)' on: body, feelings, heart / attitude, and mental objects; to gain enlightenment.

My understanding of the four satipatthanas was confused by there being different interpretations of them. Translations and commentaries were often abstruse (some seemed like guesswork), and I wasn't quite sure how they fitted in with practice. Buddhism is 2500 years old, it had at one time great scholastic universities serving 10,000 scholar monks, and in the Abhidharma, highly technical teachings about the mind and mental states. Perhaps over-elaborate ones. It is difficult to pick through this (academicism) for the essentials. Modern Science may have this fate in 2000 years time. Buddhism is on one level a very clear and simple teaching: practice ethics, non-harm and awareness, deepen that through meditation, and then develop wisdom. But its literature is also vast, and deep. Exactly what some of the teachings mean in detail in some cases needs to be unravelled. This is what I felt facing the satipatthanas.

On the other hand the cognitive model was very simple and clear.

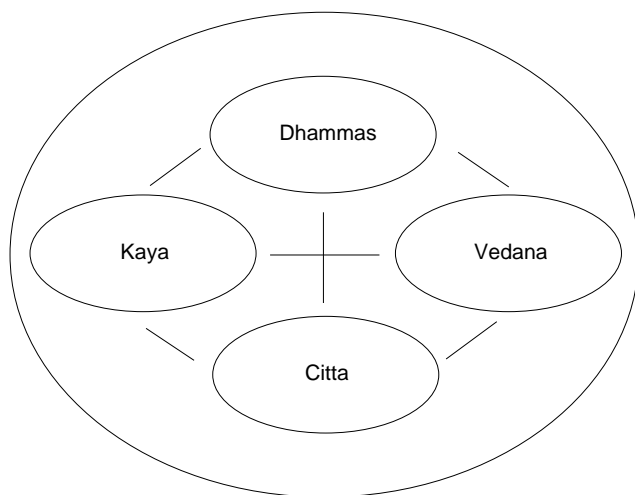
So I thought - "I wonder what will happen if I use the cognitive model to try and illustrate the four satipatthanas"

In traditional buddhism, to my knowledge, there is no mention of the four satipatthanas conditioning each other. The Satipatthana Sutta simply enumerates them in a linear order: body, feeling, heart / state of mind, and mental objects. First be aware of body, then be aware of feeling, etc. Conditionality between things was well understood though. It was well understood in meditation practice that a calm body helps the mind to calm down. So conditionality between the satipatthanas was implicit, even though it seems not to have been explored.

There is very little tradition of diagrammatic visual representation of teachings in buddhism (what you really need to represent conditionality well). Mind-maps are a relatively modern phenomenon. Lama Govinda (the late twentieth century german tibetologist and authority on buddhist ritual) in his books used diagrams, but not many have.

I was aware looking at the two lists how some of the satipatthanas clearly resembled the 'elements' of the cognitive model, although some also looked rather different. I didn't think it was a good idea to 'run them together' in a forced way, so I kept them apart, and over time just sat with the similarities and differences. I did not want to force a connection unnaturally. It is clear to me now that there needs to be two distinct models and I

Satipatthana Model  
2006 Mahabodhi



Dhammas - Mental Objects  
Vedana - Feeling

Kaya - Body  
Citta - Heart / State of Mind

have called mine the "Satipatthana Model".

I then clarified over time exactly what each satipatthana was, and looking at the satipatthanas in this way has been very revealing. A number of buddhist teachings fit into the model, for instance the traditional buddhist teachings on feeling: there do seem to be three 'modes' of feeling conditioned respectively by body, heart / state of mind, and mental assessments; physical feeling, feeling conditioned by ones ethics or lack of them, and mood (feeling based on cognitions). I am currently working on other correlations between the satipatthanas and traditional buddhist teachings.

In comparing the two models, the body satipatthana correlates with physical reactions (or biology in an earlier model). The feeling satipatthana corresponds with moods, except it also includes physical and ethically conditioned feeling. The satipatthana 'mental objects' is like thoughts in that what is meant by mental objects are assessments / views about ones perceptions. The final pairing has on the face of it the least resemblance. Behaviours and the satipatthana Citta (heart / state of mind / attitude). Except, if we see Citta as the response to our experience (that is other than assessing it, which is covered by mental objects) it *is* our behaviour, but that behaviour includes the behaviour of our mind. Actions in buddhism are of three types: bodily, verbal and mental. All activity starts in our state of mind and then expresses itself bodily and verbally. So action

(karma) includes mental action (attitude). Citta is the realm of ethics. Actions in buddhism are skilful (leading to a beneficial result) or unskilful (not leading to a beneficial result). With behaviours in the cognitive model there is an implied link with ethics in that what one is interested in with behaviour is a beneficial result. So in some senses behaviour is not that dissimilar to the heart / state of mind satipatthana. Both are linked to action and to whether it has a beneficial effect.

A further question then arose - how come the two models are so similar? A theory I am currently exploring is that the elements in both models are associated with innate and universal human faculties. The word faculty comes from the root meaning ease (as in facility) so the human faculties are those 'modes' which human beings most easily operate in. Humans have a physical aspect, a sensitivity to feeling, a faculty for action and expression, and one for assessment, all fashioned through processes of biological, social, and mental evolution. I think Aristotle first invented the notion of the faculty and thus began the process of dividing up the human being. Perhaps the work today is to help bring an understanding of how the faculties work together (through conditionality and the cognitive model). These are my very recent thoughts.

What is also interesting in terms of faculties that buddhism has a teaching called the five spiritual faculties. The central faculty is mindfulness, the faculty of awareness that observes all the others (that say looks down upon the satipatthana model). The other four spiritual faculties then correlate quite well with the four satipatthanas, and may be what is developed when that satipatthana is developed. Wisdom, for instance, being an accurate assessment of what is there correlates with mental objects in the Satipatthana model, but it also correlates with applying socratic questioning to thoughts in the cognitive model.

Please bear in mind these are my own correlations. They are not traditional. They are also work in progress, and copyright. Work in progress on my book 'On Safe Ground' and various books of diagrams like the "Satipatthana Model" are regularly updated at [www.mahabodhi.org.uk](http://www.mahabodhi.org.uk).

Mahabodhi 3 Dec 2006  
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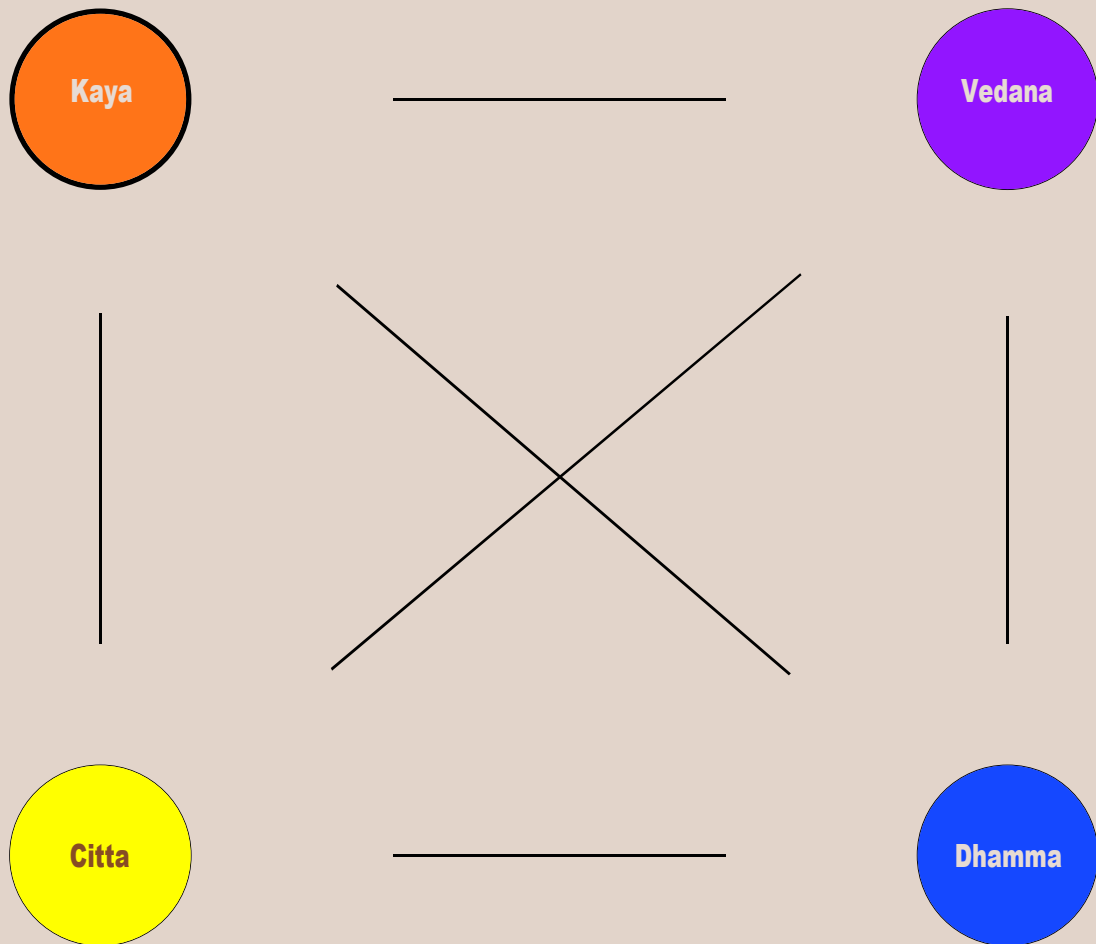
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# **the satipatthana model**

# The Satipatthana Model



**We will see in the following pages  
what this leads to ...**